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STILL WATERS









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STILL WATERS

Still Waters

*DAILY READINGS FOR EVERY DAY
IN THE YEAR*

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

J. C. WRIGHT

Author of "The Poets Laureate,"

&c., &c.



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STILL WATERS.



Jan. 1

WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

THE happy man is one who has God for his Father, Jesus Christ for his Saviour, the Holy Ghost for his Comforter, and heaven for his home. Happy is he who finds peace in his conscience, sanctifying grace in his soul, true humility in his heart, the Saviour's yoke on his neck, a vain world under his feet, and a crown of glory over his head. He is happy in trouble, because the Comforter abides with him ; in prosperity, because it is a token of covenant of love ; in poverty, because he possesses the true riches ; in duty, because the light of God's face shines on him ; in life, because Christ is his ; in death, because he is going to heaven.

REV. DR. MAGILL.

Jan. 2.

RESTING AWHILE.

NO Christian can keep his religion alive in the constant whirl of worldly excitement. Daniel needed to have an Olivet in his chamber amid Babylon's roar and idolatries. Peter found his on a housetop in Joppa; and Martin Luther found his in that "upper room" at Wittenberg, which is still held sacred. Let every child of Jesus resolve that he or she *will* have some place and seasons for meeting their beloved Master alone; and they will go forth from such interviews with their hearts lightened and their strength renewed. Our Olivets will prepare us for that mount of heavenly glory where we shall see Jesus as He is. CUYLER.

Jan. 3.

GOD'S WORLD.

CHRIST began and ended His earthly career in the belief that this was God's world, and not His; while we begin and end it under the conviction that the world is ours, and not God's. And it is safe to conclude that, after all, this is God's world. For that reason the tide of righteousness should be on the flood, while the tide of vice should be on the ebb; and a little observation will show that this is true. There never was an environment so perfect that a man could not find fault with it

if he had a bitter soul, nor an environment so full of hardship that a man could not find some comfort in it if he was willing to look and knew where to look.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

Jan. 4.

A NEW WAY.

IT is good, then, for a man to come to a future which he does not know. It is good for you if God brings you to the borders of some promised land. Do not hesitate at any experience because of its novelty. Do not draw back from any way because you never have passed there before. The truth, the task, the joy, the suffering, on whose border you are standing, O my friend, to-day go into it without a fear; only go into it with God—the God who has been always with you. Let the past give up to you all the assurance of Him which it contains. Set that assurance of Him before you. Follow that, and the new life to which it leads you shall open its best richness to you.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 3.

RECEIVING GRACE.

DO you reign in life? If not, the reason may be that you do not distinguish between *praying* and *taking*. There is a profound difference between entreating for a thing and appropriating

it. You may admit that God's abundant grace is near you through Jesus Christ, and yet you may not quite see the necessity of learning how to take. Some people are always telegraphing to heaven for God to send a cargo of blessing to them; but they are not at the wharfside to unload the vessel when it comes. How many of God's richest blessings for which you have been praying for years have come right close to you, but you do not know how to lay hold of and use them! Mark—"They which *receive* the abundance of grace shall reign." The emphasis is not on grace, not on abundance, but on *receiving* it; and the whole grace of God may be round your life to-day, but if you have not learned to take it in it will do you no good.

F. B. MEYER.

Jan. 6.

A PICTURE OF PEACE.

IN the Pitti Palace at Florence hangs a picture which represents a stormy sea, with wild waves and black clouds and fierce lightnings flashing across the sky. Wrecks float on the angry waters, and here and there a human face is seen. Out of the midst of the waves a rock rises, against which the waters dash in vain. It towers high above the crest of the waves. In a cleft of the rock are some tufts of grass and green herbage, with sweet flowers blooming, and amid these a dove is seen,

sitting on her nest, quiet and undisturbed by the wild fury of the storm, or the mad dashing of the waves below her.

The picture fitly represents the peace of the Christian amid the sorrows and trials of the world. He is hidden in the cleft of the Rock of Ages, and nestles securely in the bosom of God's unchanging love. J. R. MILLER.

Jan. 7.

THE SUBTLE TEMPTER.

THERE is a strong personal tempter in the world whose history is mysterious, but against whose "devices" we need to be on our guard. He employs sophistry to mislead, and we need to search God's Word as it is, and not to take it as Satan presents it. This enemy of God and man misrepresents God's Word, makes half truths whole errors. He suggests that God is too good to be angry with man for eating of the fruit; but God had forbidden it. We are to resist the devil. What he commends let us avoid.

JOHN HALL.

Jan. 8.

MAKING A CHOICE.

THE moment that Moses came to years of discretion, we read that he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Take that

as the starting-point of the life of service. If your circumstances are making it impossible for you to carry out what would otherwise be the will of God, then drop your circumstances as Moses did; it rests with you to do it. Refuse any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. You have been in the courts of men; you may have stood high in the favour of the people of this world, and your heirship may look exceedingly brilliant: you must choose whether you will take the heavenly inheritance or the earthly.

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

Jan. 9.

IN THE RUGGED HILLS.

THE law of compensation runs through all God's distribution of gifts. In the animal world there is a wonderful harmony, often noted, between the creatures and the circumstances and conditions amid which they are placed. The same law rules in the providence of human life. One person's lot in life is hard, with peculiar obstacles, difficulties, and trials, but hidden in it there are compensations of some kind. One is reared in affluence and luxury; he never experiences want or self-denial, never has to struggle with obstacles or adverse circumstances. Another is reared in poverty, and has to suffer toil and privation. The latter seems

to have scarcely an equal chance in life. But we all know where the compensation lies in this case. It is in such circumstances that noble manhood is grown, while too often the petted, pampered sons of luxury come to nothing. In the rugged hills of toil and hardship life's finest gold is found.

J. R. MILLER.

Jan. 10.

YOUR ONLY HOPE.

GOD is the only final dream of man. Door after door opens; there is no final chamber till we come where He sits. All that ought to be done in the world has a right to know itself as finally done for Him.

It is God, and the discovery of Him in life, and the certainty that He has plans for our lives, and is doing something with them, that gives us a true, deep sense of movement, and lets us always feel the power and delight of unknown coming things.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 11.

FAITHFULNESS AND LIBERTY

THE unity of life is never lost. There must not be any waste. How great and gracious is the economy of life which it involves! Neither to dwell in any experience always, nor to count

any experience as if it had not been, but to leave the forms of our experiences behind, and to go forth from them clothed in their spiritual power, which is infinitely free and capable of new activities—this is what God is always teaching us is possible, and tempting us to do. To him who does it come the two great blessings of a growing life—faithfulness and liberty: faithfulness in each moment's task, and liberty to enter through the gates beyond which lies the larger future. "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 12.

SIN CONQUERED.

ADAM and Eve lost the paradise, in which the Creator placed them, by sinning. Satan tempted them, and gained a temporary triumph. But in the fulness of time the Redeemer conquers Satan, and for the redeemed, believing in Him, is prepared another and a better paradise, with the tree of life for its inhabitants, and with no tempter there. There shall be not two human beings, but "a great multitude that no man can number."

JOHN HALL.

Jan. 13.

GOD'S CREED.

MAN'S creed is apt to be a long one; God's creed is **very** short. Short as it is, however, you will have no time to spare if you shape your years according to its requirements.

Love, Faith, Peace—these are golden keys which hang at the girdle when man is his best self; they unlock the mysteries of the present, and draw the bolt in the door of the future.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

Jan. 14.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

WHAT will God do this year? how will He come near to man? It may be—oh that it might be!—that He will break up this awful sluggishness of Christendom, this terrible torpidity of the Christian Church, and give us a great, true revival of religion. It may be that He will speak some great imperious command to the brutal and terrible spirit of war, and will open the gate upon a bright period of peace throughout the world. It may be that He will draw back the curtain and throw some of His light upon the question of how the poor and the rich may live together in more cordial brotherhood. It may be that

He will lead up from the depths of their common faith a power of unity into the sects of a divided Christendom.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 13.

MILLENNIUM GRACE.

WHAT harmony there is in the Bible! Abraham did not withhold his son, and He who gave His Son for man's redemption honours him for the obedient self-denial. And now He promises blessing to the race through His seed—the seed of the woman of Gen. iii. 15. The Saviour is to be in human nature, and of the Jewish race—a reason for kindly feeling towards our Hebrew brethren; and let us not forget the world-wide blessing yet to come on “all the nations of the earth.”

JOHN HALL.

Jan. 16.

THE FRAGRANCE OF PRAYER.

IN St. John's vision of heaven the redeemed are represented as having in their hands “golden vials, full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.” The meaning is not that the saints in glory offer up prayers to God; rather the thought seems to be that earth's supplications rise up to heaven as sweet incense—that while humble believers in this world are engaged in offering up

prayers and supplications, holy odours are wafted up before God. There is an exquisite beauty in this thought that true prayer is fragrance to God. The pleadings and supplications of His people on the earth rise from lowly homes, from sickrooms, from darkened chambers of grief where loved ones kneel beside their dead, from humble sanctuaries, from stately cathedrals, and are wafted up before God, as the breath of flowers is wafted to us in summer days from sweet fields and fragrant gardens. And God "smells a sweet savour." Prayer is perfume to Him.

J. R. MILLER.

Jan. 17.

TRUE GLORY.

ECCLESIASTICAL orders and titles count for nothing in the kingdom of God. Christ's reward is not to a titled clergy as such, but to "teachers" of the law and the promise. It is not to fruitless preachers, but to "turners of many to righteousness." There is a glory in the kingdom for all, no matter how varied or numerous they are. God's temple rests on many pillars. God's garden has many flowers. God's music has many notes. God's sky has many stars, though differing one from another in glory. A glory belongs to Christ, the central sun, that none of us may claim as our own.

NATHANIEL WEST.

Jan. 18.

WAIT UPON GOD.

THEY are most secure and happy who receive and obey instructions from the Lord. He gives them by His Word, interpreted by the Spirit to the soul, and by His holy and wise providence. He who looks to Him, and takes the steps which he believes God indicates as proper, has a peace that is attainable in no other way. And when He has given us a place—provided a home for us—let us see that we set up, and keep up, the altar, not for the sacrifices of atonement, but of praise and thanksgiving.

JOHN HALL.

Jan. 19.

BEAUTY IN EVERYTHING.

FOR sin and holiness are not in things, but in souls; and all things are beautiful in the time when a soul uses them for holy uses with a loving, humble, and obedient life.....The human soul sits at the centre of everything, and Christ sits at the centre of the human soul. If HE changes us, then everything will be changed to us. "He that sitteth upon the throne saith, Behold, I make all things new." If the world is ugly and bitter and cruel to you; if circumstances taunt and persecute you; if everything you touch is a strain and a temptation—do not stand idly wishing

that the world were changed. The change must be in you. To the new heart all things shall be new. The new man shall see already the new heaven and the new earth. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" and the new creature is immediately in the new creation. Some of you know already by daily experience what that means. And for all of you it waits to be revealed if you will let Christ do His work in you.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 20.

GOOD MEN WANTED.

MEN of courage are wanted, to stand in the front ranks of truth, to resist and hurl back the assaults of the enemy. Men with keen intellect are wanted, to meet the sophistries of error and the subtle attacks of infidelity and scepticism. Men with fine business abilities are wanted, to carry on the secular affairs of God's house. Men with wealth are wanted, to lay money gifts upon the altar to forward the interests of Christ's kingdom. Holy men are wanted, to witness for Christ in the face of His enemies. Men with eloquent tongues and burning hearts are wanted, to go into all the dark places of the cities, into the purlieus of vice, into the homes of sin, to tell the story of the love of God and of the cross of the Redeemer. Men of tender heart and loving

sympathy and gentle touch are wanted, to give comfort to the world's sorrow, to help other tempted men in their battles, to rescue the perishing out of their bondage. J. R. MILLER.

Jan. 21.

OUR DAILY TASKS.

DUTY forbids you and me to spend all our time in meditations, however profitable, or in psalm-singing, however sweet. There is too much work to be done, there are too many battles to be fought, too many crosses to be borne, too many trials to be endured. Spiritual frames should not unfit us for practical duties, but the hours on the mountain tops should fit us all the more for the humbler valleys of everyday life. We can have our Master with us all the time—in our common rounds and daily tasks. And the lowly valleys in which we do our work and meet our friends and business associates ought to be just as verdant and well watered as those mountain tops where we “see no man save Jesus only.” CUYLER.

Jan. 22.

THE SOCIETY OF BELIEVERS.

NOWHERE do we find on earth that picture of society reconstructed by the idea of Jesus, society around the throne of God, which shines out

upon us from the mysterious promises of the Apocalypse; the glory of which society is to be this—that while the souls stand in their vast choruses of hundreds of thousands, and all chant the same anthems and all work together in the same transcendent duties, yet each bears the sacred name written on the flesh of his own forehead, and carries in his hand a white stone, on which is written a new name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. It is individuality emphasized by company, and not lost in it, because the atmosphere in which the company is met is the idea of Jesus, which is the fatherhood of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 23.

PERFECT PARDON.

THERE is a sense in which we are to forget the things behind, the trifles that occupied us, the pleasures that fascinated us. But there is a sense in which we are to make retrospection a help to our piety. The apostle Paul not only reminds the Ephesians of the life they had lived—a life controlled by the world and the devil—but he recalls the fact that he had been a blasphemer and a persecutor. Let us, then, look back and see our sins, that we may look up and magnify our Saviour.

JOHN HALL.

Jan. 24.

THE UNUTTERABLE LOVE.

OH the freedom with which the gates of the divine forgiveness are thrown open! The Bible trembles and burns and overruns with offers. They crowd on one another. Not waiting to be asked, not giving it reluctantly, but following to tempt them with it, in His open hands the eager Saviour brings His free forgiveness. The great wonder of the Incarnation was the great miracle of that free pardon—as if sin, with all its enormity, had yet this accidental glory, almost transfiguring it, that it gave a new license of utterance to the unutterable love. The Forgiver stands upon the heights of the great human tragedy, and summons man to be forgiven.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 25.

LOYALTY TO GOD.

WHEN God has fulfilled to us His promises, we have a new reason for loyalty to Him. He is not only our Creator whom we are bound to obey, but our Benefactor, the God of grace to us. So Jacob felt as he came back with many blessings to the place where God had given him encouraging promises, and where he had vowed to make the Lord his God. So he puts away the “strange

gods." In the same spirit should we, through God's goodness leading us to repentance, put everything away that dishonours Him. May the Holy Spirit help us so to do !

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 26.

COMMUNION WITH GOD.

THERE is no joy like the joy of communion. Living apart from God is misery. Look at Gethsemane. See the Saviour's face—how sad with sorrow because of the Father's wrath ! But on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the Father said, "This is my well-beloved Son," the person of Christ glistened with glory.

Communion with God has the effect of making us joyous. The Lord does not like to see any of His disciples looking sad.....When men seek to entice you to forego communion with God, and to follow the world with them, let your face shine with the brightness that comes from your communion with the Master, and they will cease to trouble you. Christians can sometimes do more by shining for God than by speaking for Him.

ANDREW A. BONAR.

Jan. 27.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ASPIRATION.

“OH to be nothing, nothing!” cries the mystic singer in his revival hymn, desiring to lose himself in God. “Nay, not that; oh to be something, something!” remonstrates the unmystical man, longing for work, ardent for personal life and character. Where is the meeting of the two? How shall self-surrender meet that high self-value without which no man can justify his living and honour himself in his humanity? Where can they meet but in this truth? Man must be something, that he may be nothing. The something which he must be must consist in simple fitness to utter the divine life which is the only original power in the universe. And then man must be nothing, that he may be something. He must submit himself in obedience to God, that so God may use him, in some way in which his special nature only could be used, to illuminate and help the world. Tell me, do not the two cries meet in that one aspiration of the Christian man to find his life by losing it in God, to be himself by being not his own, but Christ’s?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 28.

GIVING TO GOD.

WHEN Jacob vowed to take the Lord for his God at Bethel, he pledged himself to give one-tenth of all he had to God, and the principle of consecration of means to the Lord comes down from the patriarchal and Mosaic times. The Hebrews gave of their valuables to the tabernacle and to the Levites. Moses was delighted, and as God's messenger he helped them. This use of means needs to be made to-day. Failure in it brings losses, not always of money, but of peace and of usefulness. The maintenance of the church, the aid of the poor, and the spread of the gospel—these are the fields on which to sow, and the harvest comes in due time. JOHN HALL.

Jan. 29.

GOD IN ME.

WHAT folly it is to imagine that I cannot expect God to be with me every moment! Look at the sunshine! Have you ever said, "Oh, how can I keep that sunlight, and be sure that I shall have it to use while working?" Is not God, who made the sun to shine, also willing and able to let His light and His presence so shine through me that I can walk all the day with God nearer

to me than anything in nature? Praise God, He can do it.

Why, then, does He do it so seldom, and in such feeble measure? There is but one answer: you do not permit it. You are so occupied and filled with other things—religious things, perhaps—that you do not give God time to make Himself known, and to enter and take possession.

ANDREW MURRAY.

Jan. 30.

FROM GLORY TO GLORY.

WHEN St. Paul wanted to depict the vast variety of which the world is full, it was distinctly as a variety of glory that he conceived of it. Enough he knew of the variety of woe. Easily enough he might have depicted how man, the same man still, was tossed from suffering to suffering, and remained the same identical, miserable sufferer in all. It would have been the same truth taught upon its darker side. But Paul knew that the true side on which to teach it was its side of light. The real variety of life is a variety of glories.

Such a choice of the side from which to draw his illustration is a noble characteristic of St. Paul. It is a sign of how healthy he is. Change from glory into glory—that was what life seemed to him. Remember it is no rapturous and un-

tired boy who is talking; it is a man all sore with sorrow, beaten and broken with disappointment and distress. Is it not a sign of what a true Christian he was that life seemed to him still to be only a variety and constant interchange of glories?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Jan. 31.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY.

RELIGION is communion between man and God —the finite "I" and the infinite "I AM." Christianity is religion plus the Incarnation.....If you eliminate the supernatural from Christianity, you will at once get a new religion, a new Christianity, that has no reference to the next life, no salvation—simply a moral philosophy, a theory of life, and the present life at that—a Christianity that is simply a philanthropy. And the immortality of the individual having been given up, the next thing will be to give attention to the immortality of the organism. Hence it is that some men at the present time are saying very little about the salvation of the soul, but a great deal about the salvation of the life and the regeneration of society. Hence it is that a great deal of practical Christian endeavour, that used to be addressed to the question of making men sorry for sin, and leading them to seek pardon from God, is expending itself in

providing soup-kitchens and more comfortable environment for the poor. F. L. PATTON.

Feb. 1.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF BELIEVING.

IF to believe in God is a glory and a delight, the nearer the God whom I believe in comes to me the more glorious and delightful grows my life. To tread an earth which He has trodden—to think thoughts and to feel emotions which, just as I think and feel them, in their human shapes, He, the eternal God, has thought and felt—this is assuredly a marvellous enrichment of my living. I have gone out and up into a new world with this new faith—a new world, yet the old world still; the old world teeming and bursting with new meanings, radiant with new light, sacred and beautiful all through with the remembered presence of the Son of God. Surely no man who has once known what it is to live in that world can ever turn his back upon its richness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 2.

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

TO him to whom life is but an episode—a short stage in the existence of eternity—who is always cognizant of the great surrounding world of

mystery—grief comes as angels came to the tent of Abraham. Laughter is hushed before them—the mere frolic of life stands still; but the soul takes the grief in as a guest, meets it at the door, kisses its hand, washes its travel-stained feet, spreads its table with the best food, gives it the seat by the fireside, and listens reverently for what it has to say about the God from whom it came.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 3.

THAT I MAY KNOW CHRIST.

DO we not all feel the change that had come between Paul crying submissively, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" looking to an outside Christ for commandment, and the same Paul crying, "Not I live, but Christ liveth in me,"—rejoicing in the inspiration of an inward Saviour? This was the perfect victory after which Paul was always longing so intensely. It did not come perfectly to him in this world. It cannot to any of us. Dependent as it is upon the knowledge of Christ by the soul, it cannot be perfect till the soul's knowledge of Christ shall be perfect in heaven.....The great privilege of the Christian is deepening, personal intimacy with Him who is the Christian's life, the Lord Jesus Christ. All comes to that at last. Christianity begins with

many motives. It all fastens itself at last upon one motive, which does not exclude, but is large enough to comprehend, all that is good in all the rest, "That I may know Him."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 4.

TRUE AMBITION.

THESE lives of ours, hurrying on in their ambitions, spreading out in their loves—they are capable of being filled with God.

Without losing their eager pursuit of their appointed task, without losing their cordial reaching after the lives around them, they shall be quietly, steadily, nobly lifted into something of the peace and dignity of the God whom they aspire to.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 5.

"MEET FOR THE MASTER'S USE."

WHEN one is thirsty, it matters little whether the water is offered in a common earthen cup or in a golden pitcher. When one is very hungry and you carry him bread, he does not care whether you take it on a silver plate or on a wooden tray. So the grace of Christ may be carried just as well in the heart of a plain fisherman as in that of a learned rabbi; but the vessel

must be clean. Christ will not send the blessing of eternal life to lost men through unholy lives. He will not honour us by putting us in trust with the gospel if our own hearts are unclean and impure.

J. R. MILLER.

Feb. 6.

ALL IS WELL.

O LORD, by all Thy dealings with us, whether of joy or pain, of light or darkness, let us be brought to Thee. Let us value no treatment of Thy grace simply because it makes us happy or because it makes us sad, because it gives us or denies us what we want; but may all that Thou sendest us bring us to Thee, that, knowing Thy perfectness, we may be sure in every disappointment that Thou art still loving us, and in every darkness that Thou art still enlightening us, and in every enforced idleness that Thou art still using us; yea, in every death that Thou art giving us life, as in His death Thou didst give life to Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 7.

THE CALMNESS OF PEACE

THE people in all lines of duty who do the most work are the calmest, most unhurried people in the community. Duties never wildly

chase each other in their lives. One task never crowds another out, nor ever compels hurried, and therefore imperfect, doing. The calm spirit works methodically, doing one thing at a time, and doing it well; and it therefore works swiftly, though never appearing to be in haste.

We need the peace of God in our heart just as really for the doing well of the little things of our secular life as for the doing of the greatest duties of Christ's kingdom. Our face ought to shine, and our spirit ought to be tranquil, and our eye ought to be clear, and our nerves ought to be steady, as we press through the tasks of our commonest day. Then we shall do them all well, slurring nothing, marring nothing. We want heart-peace before we begin any day's duties, and we should wait at Christ's feet ere we go forth.

J. R. MILLER.

Feb. 8.

SOCIETY HELPING INDIVIDUALITY.

THERE are some things of the individual life which the individual cannot get save in the company of fellow-men. There are some parts of his own true life always in his brethren's keeping, for which he must go to them. That the individual may find and be his own truest and fullest self, Jesus, his Master, leads him to his fellows.

The wedding guest at Cana, the Pharisee at Levi's table, the sisters with their restored brother, the brothers of the Lord in the house of the carpenter—all, just as soon as Jesus sanctified and blessed the society in which they lived, saw, coming to them as it were out of the heart of that society, a selfhood which no solitary contemplation could have gained. Each of them found his Father among his brethren—reached God through the revelation of other human lives.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 9.

THE HIGHEST PLEASURE.

HOW shall we get pardon? By faith? Faith in whom? The Saviour who died for us. And there comes with the pardon peace with God. The guilt is put away for Christ's sake. We are reconciled. No more are we enemies, but friends—yes, children. We stand in grace, in the fatherly favour of our Creator. Is this all? No, indeed. There is coming glory in our Father's house with the angels. Ah! but this is far away, at the end of life. True, but it is a pleasant source of happiness. We "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." "Pleasures of hope" all understand. This is the highest of them all. Be sure, dear reader, that you have it.

JOHN HALL.

Feb. 10.

CONSECRATION.

PERHAPS our conception of consecration has been poor and inadequate. We have been thinking of service simply, and that in connection with the body ; we have said, "Take my hands, take my lips, take my feet," and so on in a kind of sentimental, anatomical way. We have not thought of being God-filled, God-possessed, quite apart from considerations of service. I grow weary of the perpetual spurring on of God's people to service—as if any father ever cared so much to have his children toiling for him as loving and trusting him—and the more so as the God-possessed Christian invariably does serve. There is a higher thought—the enthronement of Jesus as Lord of all, and once for all ; there should be no call for reconsecration in the Christian's experience.

C. I. SCOFIELD.

Feb. 11.

"CONVERTING THE SOUL."

READ the Nineteenth Psalm from the beginning. Here are two volumes of God's works. The first is Creation, from ver. 1 to ver. 6 : "The heavens declare His glory." Then begins the description of the second volume. It is the Revelation we have in our Bibles. It is adapted to

spiritual work. One may be an astronomer, a natural philosopher, and know the eternal power and Godhead of Deity; but to be converted we have to know "the law of the Lord," which is "perfect," intelligible to the simple, and His statutes, which go to the heart as well as to the intellect, and it rejoices. Study the second volume devoutly.

JOHN HALL.

Feb. 12.

ACQUAINT THYSELF.

THE more you come into communion with God, catch His spirit, understand His life; the more quick your eye becomes to detect the spiritual life of other men, though it be hidden under the strangest forms, the more broad your heart grows to embrace it. Coming to love God is like climbing a high mountain. It takes you out of the low valley of formal life. It sets you upon the open summit of spiritual sympathy, close to the sun. Thence you look out into unguessed regions of noble thought and living, with which you never dreamed that you had anything to do. There never was a man who really tried to serve God who did not have his sympathy with his fellow-men widened thereby.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 13.

TWO NATURES.

LOOK at God. Who is God? He is the great Being for whom alone the universe exists, in whom alone it can have happiness. It came from Him; it can find no rest or joy outside of Him. Oh, if only Christians understood and believed that God is nothing but a fountain of happiness and perfect, everlasting blessedness, the result would be that every Christian would say, "The more I can have of God, His will and His love and His fellowship, the happier." If they believed that with their whole heart, how they would with the utmost ease give up everything that might separate them from God!.....

Look at men's nature. For what was man created? Simply to live in the likeness of God, and as His image. Now, if we have been created in the image and likeness of God, we can find our happiness in nothing but in what God finds His happiness. The more like to Him we are, the happier we shall be. In what does God find His happiness? In two things—everlasting righteousness and everlasting beneficence. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." The kingdom, the rule of God, will bring us nothing but righteousness.

ANDREW MURRAY.

Feb. 14.

HATRED OF SIN.

TO know first of all and deepest of all that that battle which goes on within us is God's battle is of supreme importance. What are our sins? What is your selfishness, your untruthfulness, your cruelty? Is it something which hurts and hinders you? Indeed it is. But beyond that it is something which usurps a kingdom which belongs to God. It is His enemy. And every movement of your conscience, every sense of usurpation and of incongruity, is not merely the revolt of your own outraged soul; it is also the claim of the true King upon His kingdom—it is the sound of the monarch's trumpet summoning the rebellious castle to surrender. Believe this, and what a dignity enters into the moral struggle of our life! It is no mere restless fermentation, the disturbed nature out of harmony with itself. It is God, with the great moral gravitation of universal righteousness, dragging this stray and wayward atom back into Himself.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 13.

EASY TO HURT OTHERS.

WE are so related to each other that we are continually leaving impressions on those we touch. It is easier to do harm than good to

other lives. There is a quality in the human soul which makes it take more readily and retain more permanently touches of sin than touches of holiness. Among the ruins of some old temple there was found a slab which bore very faintly and dimly the image of the king, and in deep and clear indentations the print of a dog's foot. The king's beauty was less clear than the marks of the animal's tread. So human lives are apt to take less readily and deeply, to retain less indelibly, the touches of spiritual beauty, and more clearly and permanently the marks and impressions of evil. It needs, therefore, in us infinite carefulness and watchfulness, as we walk ever amid other lives, lest by some word, or look, or act, or influence of ours we hurt them irreparably.

J. R. MILLER.

Feb. 16.

A USEFUL LIFE.

THERE is no life so humble that, if it be true and genuinely human and obedient to God, it may not hope to shed some of His light. There is no life so meagre that the greatest and wisest of us can afford to despise it. We cannot know at what sudden moment it may flash forth with the life of God.

How life lifts itself up with interest and dignity

when it becomes the culture of God's redeemed children for their Father's house !

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 17.

HAVING ALL THINGS.

THE inexorable law is that your own way shall prove itself the worst way, and that God's way, which is sometimes plentifully sprinkled with disappointments, is, after all and in the long run, the best way.

When we begin to count the things we ought to have, we begin to be miserable ; but when we begin to be thankful for the things we really possess, we begin to be happy.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

Feb. 18.

GROWING LIKE CHRIST.

YOU will realize the vital necessity of an increase of faith if you will but understand that faith is vastly more than an intellectual process or a mental assent to divine truth. It is vastly more than a devout emotion ; and a mightily different thing is it from the pious fetish that some religious quacks are now employing for purposes of delusion. A genuine Christian faith is just the grappling union of the soul with the omnipotent

Son of God. "I am the vine, ye are the branches: abide in me." This is the way in which Christ puts it, and *faith makes that very union*. The closer your connection with Jesus is, the greater will be the amount of grace that flows into your soul and out into your daily life.....The more abundant your faith, the fuller and more potent will be the inflow of Jesus Christ. CUYLER.

Feb. 19.

SWEET OUT OF BITTER.

PROSPERITY has never enriched the world as adversity has done. The best thoughts, the richest lessons, the sweetest songs, that have come down to us from the past have not come from the minds and hearts of those who have known no privation, no suffering, no adversity, but are the fruit of pain, of weakness, of trial. Men have cried out for emancipation from the bondage of hardship, of sickness, of infirmity, of self-denying necessity, not knowing that the thing which seemed to be hindering them in their career was the very making of whatever was noble, beautiful, and blessed in their life. The cost of all truly helpful life is pain. We must not forget that redemption and heaven come to be ours only through the cross of the Son of God. In all life the sweetest comforts and the richest blessings come to us at

the cost of suffering and tears in those who went before us. The fruit of earth's "thorns" seems bitter to the taste, but it is the wholesome food of human souls.

J. R. MILLER.

Feb. 20.

NOT BY BREAD ALONE.

WHAT a man finds in his own consciousness he is strengthened by being able also to recognize in the whole history of his race. "It is written" long ago this which he is doing now. He is only tracing over with his blood the unfaded characters which other men have written in theirs. It is not a mere whim of his, this conviction that it is better to serve God than to eat bread. It is the corporate conviction of mankind. That is a very mysterious support, but it is a real one. It plants the weak tree of your will or mine into the rich soil of humanity. Do not lose that strength. Do not so misread history that it shall seem to you when you try to do right as if you were the first man that ever tried it. Put yourself with your weak little struggle into the company of all the strugglers in all time. Recognize in your little fight against your avarice, or your untruthfulness, or your laziness, only one skirmish in that battle whose field covers the earth, and whose clamour rises and falls from age to age, but never wholly dies.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 21.

THE STRENGTH OF MY HEART.

I WILL be your God," says the Maker of heaven and earth. He comes to us Christians in Christ. When we accept Him, He is all in all to us. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee?" Saints are there; so are angels. But God is the being to be trusted, prayed to, and obeyed. He is the portion of the soul. We need teaching. He is the Father of light, and He gives it. We need some one stronger and wiser than we are to look to and lean upon. He is our Father in Christ. We need to be provided for, and He makes us His sons, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We shall lose in time all that is dearest to us on earth, but He is our "portion for ever." Blessed be His name.

JOHN HALL.

Feb. 22.

GOD'S PLACE.

ALLOW God to take His place in your heart and life. Luther often said to people, when they came to him about difficulties, "Do let God be God." Let God be all in all, every day in your life, from morning to evening. No more say, "I and God;" let it be "God and I"—God first, and I second; God to lead, and I to follow; God to work all in me, and I to work out only what God

works ; God to rule, and I to obey. Even in that order there is a danger, for the flesh is so subtle, and one might begin to think, "It is God and I. Oh what a privilege that I have such a partner !" There might be secret self-exaltation in associating God with myself. There is a more precious word still—"God and not I ; not God first, and I second : God is all, and I am nothing." Paul said, "I laboured more abundantly than they all, though I be nothing."

ANDREW MURRAY.

Feb. 23.

A SECOND PENTECOST.

TALK about the power of Cæsar, Napoleon, Alexander, the great generals and warriors of this earth ! Why, it is nothing to the power of the man who is in communion with God. Elisha was not going to ask for a small thing. He says, "I want a double portion of thy spirit." I can see Elijah turn round to him in surprise and say, "You have asked me a hard thing." But he says, "If you see me when I am taken from you, you shall have it." "Then," says Elisha, "you'll not get away without my seeing you." He wanted a double portion of Elijah's spirit, and he was determined to get it. So he took good care to see him in the chariot ; and he did see him. Elisha performed twice the number of miracles that Elijah did.

Jesus Christ has come down from heaven since then; and is it so wonderful to ask for the power of the Spirit? We ought to have a hundred times more power than Elijah and Elisha had.

D. L. MOODY.

Feb. 24.

CARING FOR YOU.

HUMAN hearts have often heavy burdens to carry, and they are hardest when we try to carry them in our own strength. It is wise to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. When we cling to Him and show that we look for all our strength from Him, He will lift us and hold us up. Cares come as to work, as to means, even as to such things as food and raiment. Let us not forget the man Christ Jesus, as He says to us, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." You place them, dear reader, on your table and on your bosom. Do more than look at them and invite the admiration of others. "Consider them." Learn reliance on God for all you need. He careth for His children. Are you among them? If so, He will carry your cares. JOHN HALL.

Feb. 25.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN.

THE real life, what is it? Is it the wretched, sordid details of earthly living, uninspired by a single suggestion that in their mud and mire there are the seeds of any spiritual, transcendent fruit or flower? On the other hand, is the real life a vision of some experience beyond the stars which has no connection with the dreariness and degradation of many of the mortal conditions which it has passed through and left behind? Not so. The real life of a man is his highest attainment kept in perpetual association with the meanest and commonest experience out of which it has been fed. When men shall so write and paint the lives of one another, then we shall have the true realism—a realism in which, to use the Psalmist's words, "truth shall flourish out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 26.

AS THE BRIGHT SUN.

JOY is love looking at its treasures. The richer you become in having Christ with you here, and in the expectation of being with Him for ever, the more investments you make in helping other

people, and drying tears and saving souls, the fuller will be your jewel-casket. If you say to me, "I have not enjoyed my religion much lately," then I may suggest to you that you had not much religion to enjoy. Turn a new leaf; make a new start, with the honest question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and then do it. His smile will give you sunshine, and put a new song into your mouth. Put more conscience into your religion. Weakness means wickedness. Don't worry over "hard times" or outside troubles; if you have peace of conscience, you can stand rough weather cheerfully.

CUYLER.

Feb. 27.

ALL THINGS OURS.

MAN never is sent into the world and bidden to evolve out of his own being the conditions in which he is to live. Always there is something before him.....The food is before the hunger, and says, "I have waited for you to come." The river is before the thirst. Beauty was in the sky and on the hills before the eye was fashioned. Music was breathing on the winds before the ear was framed. Fragrance was in the violet and the forest before the nostrils came to catch its odour. The picture was before the imagination which discerned it—the sea before the ship that sailed it. Man finds the rocks waiting with their problems,

frost and heat holding their inspiration and their comfort in expectation of his coming. And he never says, "Here I am," that the servants do not stand in ranks at the door of his great homestead to welcome the heir into his own, and to pledge him their obedient service. The material is background for the spiritual—the earth, which is body, for man, who is soul. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 28.

FAITHFUL IN LITTLE.

YOU who are wishing you could do a thing you ought to do, and hiding behind your weakness—you must hear God saying, "Do it!" and feel the necessity of obeying Him—the joy of pleasing Him—run through your being like the strong blood of a new life. Then—then only—you are on your feet, and the impossible thing is done.

If you do your work with complete faithfulness, you are making as genuine a contribution to the substance of the universal good as is the most brilliant worker whom the world contains. You are setting as true a fact between the eternities as he. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Feb. 29.

"THE GRASS WITHERETH."

WE look over the fields : the grass is not as in summer time. We look into the flower-garden : the charm of it is gone. There is a season when our eyes do not rest on those beautiful gifts of God to our race. And so there is often a winter time in life ; but it is limited. The word of the Lord endureth for ever, and it announces an eternity for God's children in which there shall be no winter of discontent, or solitude, or sickness, or of distance from the "Sun of righteousness ;" when the perfected being shall be clothed in the beauties of holiness. Let us make sure that we believe this word.

JOHN HALL.

March 1.

LIFE IN GOD.

HOLINESS does not make men monotonous. The dimmer the light the more things look alike. Increase the light, and then you see how different they are. Childhood with its bright hopefulness, and manhood with its enterprise, and womanhood with its tenderness—each grows more specially itself at the touch of grace. The old man and the young man, the thinker, the artist, the worker, the merchant, the doctor, and the lawyer—out of each comes up to the surface a profounder

individuality when they all begin to live to God. And the subtler differences which distinguish man from man and woman from woman, making each being a separate thought of God, unlike any other—these become clearer as the idea of God in the creation of each becomes more fully realized.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 2.

PRESENT IN PERPLEXITY.

A PERFECT poise, that altitude of faith from which the ideal man looks down on the perplexities of life in calm survey, and looks up to a God who from that point of vantage seems close at hand, may be difficult of attainment, but it is worth all the struggles it will cost.

It is faith, after all, which produces all the magic in our lives; for it is just as necessary to our personal happiness to lift up our hands to heaven, in the belief that unseen beings will lead us through the falling night, as it is for a child to believe that its father will protect it in the coming storm.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

March 3.

BETHEL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
WORTH LIVING FOR

ARCHITECTS make their names immortal by rearing some noble building, some great cathedral, some gorgeous palace, which stands for

ages to their honour. Artists carve in marble or paint on canvas or in fresco the splendid creations of their genius, and for centuries the world pays them homage. The poet writes in classic verse the fancies of his brain or the deeper thoughts of his soul, and is crowned. These are noble achievements. But it is nobler far when a young man takes his life from God, with reverence and faith and love, and builds a beautiful, holy manhood, for men, angels, and God to look upon through eternal years. That is the mission to which every young man is called. Surely it is noble enough to call out the best energies of the soul. A living character is infinitely greater than a cold, lifeless statue.

J. R. MILLER.

March 4.

AS WE SOW WE REAP.

THE world seems to be a great field in which every man drops his seed, and which gives back to every man, not just the same thing which he dropped there, any more than the brown earth holds up to you in the autumn the same black-berry which you hid under its bosom in the spring, but something which has its true correspondence and proportion to the seed to which it is the legitimate and natural reply. Every gift has its return, every act has its consequence, every call

has its answer, in this great live, alert world, where man stands central, and all things have their eyes on him and their ears open to his voice.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 3.

"ANOTHER COMFORTER."

HUMAN affections are implanted by the Creator. The removal of an object on which they are fixed is discomfoting. So our blessed Lord saw it would be with the disciples, and He promised them a Comforter. That Comforter would recall the things of Christ, and show to the friends of Jesus things to come. Then they could learn to rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Many a human being has to mourn in bereavement. Here is the best fountain of comfort—"things to come," as Christ revealed them to believers. Be His disciples. Look for and listen to His representative, the Holy Spirit.

JOHN HALL.

March 6.

SACRIFICE A GAIN.

IF the life which you have chosen to be your life is really worthy of you, it involves self-sacrifice and pain. If your Jerusalem really is your sacred city, there is certainly a cross in it. What then? Shall you flinch and draw back?

Shall you ask for yourself another life? Oh no, not another life, but another self. Ask to be born again. Ask God to fill you with Himself, and then calmly look up and go on. Go up to Jerusalem expecting all things that are written concerning you to be fulfilled. Disappointment, mortification, misconception, enmity, pain, death—these may come to you, but if they come to you in doing your duty it is all right. “It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem,” said Jesus. “It is dreadful to suffer except in doing duty. To suffer there is glorious.” That is our translation of His words into our own life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 7.

THE MEANING OF TIME.

OUR days are like beautiful summer fields, as God gives them to us. The minutes are lovely, blooming flowers and silvery grass blades, and stalks of wheat with their germs of golden foliage, or vines with their blossoms—prophecies of coming purple clusters. Oh the fair possibilities of the days and hours and minutes as they come to us from God's hands! But what did you do with yesterday? How does the little acre of that one day look to you now? Is it waving with beauty? Are there no waste spots in it? What did you do with the seven days of last week?

How does that seven-acre field appear to you as you view it from the hilltop of the holy Sabbath? Are there no wasted minutes, no squandered hours?

J. R. MILLER.

March 8.

COMMON SERVICE.

IT is not, if we understand it rightly, a sign of decreasing but of increasing spirituality that miracles have ceased. And so it is a truer discrimination that recognizes the presences of God in men, the saints that are in the world, not by the miracles they work, but by the miracles they are, by the way in which they bring the grace of God to bear on the simple duties of the household and the street. The sainthoods of the fireside and of the market-place—they wear no glory round their heads; they do their duties in the strength of God; they have their martyrdoms and win their palms; and though they get into no calendars, they leave a benediction and a force behind them on the earth when they go up to heaven.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 9.

OUR PATTERN.

ONCE think it possible that God should fill a humanity with Himself, once see humanity capable of being filled with God, and can you

conceive of His not doing it? Must there not be an Incarnation? Do you not instantly begin to search earth for the holy steps? Once think it possible that Christ can, and are you not sure that Christ must give Himself for our redemption? So only, when it seems inevitable and natural, does the Christhood become our pattern. Then only does it shine on the mountain-top up toward which we can feel the low lines of our low life aspiring. The Son of God is also the Son of Man. Then in us, the sons of men, there is the key to the secret of His being and His work. Know Christ, that you may know yourself. But oh, also know yourself, that you may know Christ!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 10.

THANKSGIVING.

IT is assumed in Scripture that, sinful though we be, we shall receive much good at God's hand. His servants are made a "royal priesthood," and it is theirs to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving. But it is assumed that we shall have times of trouble, and we are directed what to do at such times: "Call upon me." But why did not God keep it away? Perhaps we needed it to bring us near to Him. The deliverance is a fresh cause for thanksgiving. "Thou shalt glorify me." Dear reader, is this your way of dealing

with troubles? Are you, with vivid memories of God's help to you, glorifying Him?

JOHN HALL.

March 11.

POWER OF HABIT.

A CALIFORNIA stage driver had held the lines for many years, and when he began to grow old his hands were crooked into hooks, and his fingers were stiffened in that shape so that they could not be straightened out.

There is a similar process that goes on in men's souls when they continue to do the same things over and over. If you are trained, and train yourself, from childhood, to be gentle and patient, to control your temper, to resist wrong, your life will grow into beauty, and the peacefulness of your heart will at length shine upon your very face. On the other hand, if you give way from childhood to all ugly tempers, resentful feelings, all bitterness and anger, your life will grow into unloveliness and unrest.

J. R. MILLER.

March 12.

CHRIST IN US.

NOT only a Christ to stand outside and support with the strong hands of His forgiveness, but a Christ to come in and strengthen by the power of His incorporated life. Christ is the Staff we lean on, the Rock we stand on, the Light that

leads us, the Master on whose breast we lie ; but He is also the Bread of Life. He is many things outside of us—Wisdom, Righteousness, Redemption. He is also something inside of us—Sanctification. He says, “Lean on Me, stand on Me, take hold of Me and walk.” But when He takes up His deepest word, it is this—“Feed on Me ; unless you feed on Me, you have no life in you.”

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 13.

AS IN GOD'S SIGHT.

THERE is no truly Christian man who keeps an unconverted pocket-book. God's universal law of unselfish service is as supreme in the domain of material possessions—in the realm of that wealth which extends a man's power “to bring things to pass”—as it is in any other department of man's possible efforts. The unvarying law of God, which attaches an obligation to every opportunity and places a duty over against every right, makes no exception of wealth with its vast powers of service. God has so ordered the social life of our race that no man can make the most of his powers of mind and heart and will until he employs those powers in the service of his fellow-men.

M. E. GATES.

March 14.

FAITHFUL TO FORGIVE.

SOME one has said, "Unconfessed sin in the soul is like a bullet in the body." If you haven't power, it may be there is some sin that needs to be confessed, something in your life that needs to be straightened out. No amount of psalm-singing, no amount of attending religious gatherings, no amount of praying, no amount of reading your Bible, is going to cover up anything of that kind. If I have too much pride to confess my sins, I needn't expect mercy from God, or answers to my prayers.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." He may be a man in the pulpit, a priest behind the altar, or a king on the throne—I don't care who he is; he will fail. Man has been trying it for six thousand years. Adam tried it and failed; Moses tried it when he buried the Egyptian, but he failed; David tried it; priests, and kings, and princes, and the best men that ever trod the earth, have tried it, but all have failed.

D. L. MOODY.

March 15.

WHAT LACKEST THOU?

IS there nothing that Christ as your Friend, your Lord, your Saviour, wants you to do that you are leaving undone to-day? Do you doubt one

instant that, with His high and deep love for your soul, He wants you to pray?—and do you pray? Do you doubt one instant that it is His will that you should honour and help and bless all these men about you who are His brethren?—and are you doing anything like that? Do you doubt one instant that His will is that you should make life serious and lofty?—and are you making it frivolous and low? Do you doubt one instant that He wants you to be pure in deed and word and thought?—and are you pure? Do you doubt one instant that His command is for you openly to own Him and declare that you are His servant before all the world?—and have you done it? These are the questions which make the whole matter clear.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 16.

“GROWING IN GRACE.”

MANY a time a Christian is despondent over the little spiritual progress that is made. What should be done then? Look up to the “God of peace,” reconciled in Christ. He carried out His holy will in Christ, and raised Him from the dead. He can raise you too from the spiritual deadness you deplore. He can “make you perfect in every good work”—not, perhaps, to do all you desire, but to do “His will.” He can work within you what He approves, and all through the teach-

ing, the example, the grace, the finished work of Jesus. Look away from self to Him.

JOHN HALL.

March 17.

A NEW STRENGTH.

FOR years you have lived, it may be, a secluded and protected life. "Lead me not into temptation"—so you have prayed every morning, and every day has brought the answer to your prayer. But some day all that breaks and goes to pieces. A great temptation comes, and is not hindered. Then you cry out for the old mercy, and it is not given.....And then, behold what comes! A new mercy! You go into the temptation. Your old security perishes, but by-and-by out of its death comes a new strength. Not to be saved from dying, but to die and then to live again in a new security, a strong and trusty character, educated by trial, purified by fire—that is what comes as the issue of the whole. Not a victory for you, preserving you from danger, but a victory in you, strengthening you by danger—that is the experience from which you go forth, strong with a strength which nothing can subdue.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 18.

IF YE OBEY.

THE setting of the less finite into the complete infinite nature Christ calls by various names. Sometimes it is *faith*: you must *believe* in God. Sometimes it is *affection*: you must *love* God. Always what it means is the same thing—you must *belong* to God. Then His life shall be your life. I am come to bring you to Him, so that you may have life and have it more abundantly. Sometimes He seems to gather up His fullest declaration of this vital connection of man with God and call it in one mighty word, *Obedience*. You must *obey* God, and so live by Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 19.

SEEKING GOD'S WILL.

IT was in His sonship to God that the secret of the holiness of Jesus lay. His Father's business was the sum of all His life.....The model and the impulse of all duty He carried in His own filial heart, which was for ever bearing witness to Him of His Father's perfectness. His incarnate days, with all their common duties held and illuminated in that high consciousness of sonship, must have been one with the eternity of the past and the eternity that was to be. Duty must have been

its own revealer and its own reward. Liberty must have been sublimely consistent with the most scrupulous obedience. The doing right and the being right must have been like the sunshine and the sun. And what duty was to our Master it shall be to us just as soon as we are filled with His idea—just as soon as His Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 20.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE.

DID you ever stand at the foot of a great lighthouse at night? Through brilliant lenses splendid floods of light were poured out to sea; but not one tiny little gleam of radiance did that great lamp pour on the bit of sand close around the base of its tower. Do not be like lighthouses in this regard. Wherever else, far away or near, you pour the beams of your Christian life, be sure you brighten the space close about you in your own home. Let the light of gentleness, forbearance, kindness, unselfishness, and thoughtful ministry fall on the life next to yours—on your weary mother, your burdened father, your tempted brother; upon the children in your family, on the guests who drop in, on servants who help in domestic duties. Carry Christ home and serve Him best there.

J. R. MILLER.

March 21.

UNSEEN POWERS.

ST. PAUL believed in spirits good and bad. The beauty of his belief in them was that, different as they might be from us in the conditions of their life, they still belonged to the same great moral system to which he belonged. The good spirits were not to be propitiated, and the evil spirits were not to be disarmed, by magic and incantations. He who did righteousness called to himself the most mysterious strength of the unseen worlds.....For him all good beings fought; against his simple righteousness all evil beings would beat themselves in vain, and ultimately must go down and fail, here or beyond the stars. That is a noble faith. In the simplicity and grandeur of a faith like that, man will some day come once more to the now almost lost belief in the connection of his life with unseen spiritual powers.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 22.

THOU SHALT LOVE.

THOU shalt love. The duty of loving—there is nothing of that in the codes of abstract duty. It is impossible to exclude that from its fundamental place in the system of duty whose constant spring is in the fatherhood of God.....Of

this quality in duty it is no Christian's place to be ashamed or afraid. None of us may melt it away or sink it out of sight. In its prominence lies the soul of the duty that we do. We may not try to make that duty cold and soulless which has its true being in the central commandment which is its living soul—"Thou shalt love."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 23.

SERVING TWO MASTERS.

WE become inevitably and insensibly assimilated to that which most completely absorbs our time and attention. One cannot be constantly mixed in secular society without not only losing something of his interest in the divine society of God and angels, where he belongs by his new birth, but also becoming himself secularized. "Our citizenship is in heaven," says the Scripture. It is a sublime conception that even while here in the flesh we hold residence among seraphs and saints of the New Jerusalem. It is for us, therefore, scrupulously to keep to our heavenly fellowship, to pay taxes where we live, and to refuse to be assessed by any rival system to Christ's true church—simply because a divided loyalty is impossible.

A. J. GORDON.

March 24.

TAKE HEED.

WE, if disciples of the Redeemer, have a double responsibility. We have to guard against unbelief. Its seat is in the heart, and the heart is evil that tolerates it. And we have to care for others. In the above text the apostle speaks to "brethren." We have to care for others—not now and then, but "daily," and to watch, warn, and strive against sin. It is deceitful. The father of lies tempts to it. By good example, by tender feeling, by gentle words, by "the truth in love" we are to help one another to be faithful unto death. Then comes "the crown of life."

JOHN HALL.

March 25.

LIGHT IN OBSCURITY.

GO; do your duty, giving to every task the sublimest motive which you know and which you can bring to bear upon it. Get at the essence of goodness, which is not in its enthusiasms or delights, but in its heart of consecration. Sometimes the consecration may be all the more thorough and complete when the joy of consecration seems to be farthest away. And yet every consecration made in the darkness is reaching out toward the light, and in the end must come out into the light,

strong in the strength which it won in its life and struggle in the dark.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 26.

"ALL IS YOURS."

THERE is no favouritism with God; just as the spring flowers, the sunshine, and the pure air are for all, as free to the beggar as to the sovereign, so God's abundant grace is for every man and woman, and there is nothing that any one has ever had which you may not have if you will. The same stream is passing your door, though you may not utilize the power to drive your water-wheel; the same electricity is in the air, though you have not learned to make it flash your messages or do the work of your home. The same grace that made a Luther, a Knox, a Latimer, a Frances Ridley Havergal, or a Spurgeon, is for you to-day, and if you are living a low-down life, beaten and thwarted and dashed down and constantly compelled to admit shortcomings and failure, understand it is not because there is any favouritism on God's part; because all the Holy Ghost's power, and everything which is stored in Jesus Christ, is waiting to make you a saint, and to lift you to the level which you pine for in your best moments. It makes a great difference when a man understands this.

F. B. MEYER.

March 27.

NO CLASS DISTINCTIONS.

MEN cry to-day, "Christianity is the religion of the rich and comfortable;" and while they speak, their cry is drowned in the rush of the poor, the hungry, and the wretched to some common men's revival. They cry again, "The Christian belief belongs to the ignorant," and, lo, the wisest thought of the world comes back again, as it is ever coming, to the mystery of Christ and of His treatment of the soul of man. It is not that they have mistaken the class to which they should assign the Christian faith. Their mistake is in giving it to any class. It belongs to the individual. It always has its eyes fastened on him. One of the noblest functions of Christianity in the world is to lie behind the class crystallizations of mankind, like a solvent into which they shall return and blend with one another—to crystallize, no doubt, again, but always to be reminded that the classes into which they crystallize are lesser facts than the manhood into which they are repeatedly dissolved.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 28.

THE UNSEEN HAND.

THERE is an unseen hand that holds the helm of every godly life. While the errorist is blown about by every wind, and the selfish sinner

is left to steer his own course—often toward rocks or quicksands—the voyage of every true believer is ordered by the Lord. We are often obliged to pull the oars of duty with our backs to the future. We cannot tell what the morrow shall bring forth. It is our business to pull at the oars of prayer and labour, and to leave the rudder in the divine Helmsman's hand. We commit our way to Him. He knows where the shoals and the sunken rocks are, and where the deep water is also; let the omniscient Pilot do the steering. The poor disciples had a rough night of it while the Master was asleep in the stern of the boat. He was teaching them a lesson; and when in their extremity they called up the Helmsman, the storm lulled, and their fishing-smack swam safe into harbour.

CUYLER.

March 29.

CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN.

RELIGION is not worth much if it encourages your discontent; for, after all, if you and the Lord keep together you will always be in good company, and always have something to make you glad and cheerful. What is around you will be brightened by what is above you; and to-day, cloudy though it be, will be made radiant by the hopes that come from the great to-morrow.

It is when the heart is not satisfied that the

nature of your environment assumes undue importance. Two rooms will do, if nothing better can be had, when love would build a home; but a palace is too small when the heart is aching.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

March 30.

A SPIRITUAL TEMPLE.

FOOD is not health. The human body is built just so as to turn food into health and strength. And truth is not holiness. The human soul was made to turn, by the subtle chemistry of its digestive experience, truth into goodness.

The duty of physical health and the duty of spiritual purity and loftiness are not two duties; they are two parts of one duty. Be good, that you may be well; be well, that you may be good.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

March 31.

SERVICE FROM ALL.

THERE are ways in which even silent people can do service for God and be a blessing in the world. A star does not talk, but its calm, steady beam shines down continually out of the sky, and is a benediction to many. A flower cannot sing bird-songs, but its sweet beauty and gentle fragrance make it a blessing wherever it is

seen. Be like a star in your peaceful shining, and many will thank God for your life. Be like a flower in your pure beauty and in the influence of your unselfish spirit, and you may do more to bless the world than many who talk incessantly. The living sacrifice does not always mean active work. It may mean the patient endurance of a wrong, the quiet bearing of a pain, cheerful acquiescence in a disappointment.

J. R. MILLER.

April 1.

INSIDIOUSNESS OF SIN.

IS it not wonderful to see how few sins in this world are done flatly, fairly, blankly, as sins? We carry our consciences by side attacks, by elaborate strategies and artifices. We almost never charge up in the face of our sense of right and take it by assault. It is a very rare thing—I think much rarer than we are often ready to suppose—for a man to say to himself, This thing is bad, bad and not good, certainly and necessarily nothing but bad, and yet I will do it.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 2.

THE SINNER ACCEPTED.

THE sinner is the property of God. He has fled from God, and is now under the curse of alienation and separation. Not only so, but he

has wronged God, and has robbed Him besides. The law of God provides no right of asylum for the sinner. He is the absolute property of God—both a bond-slave and a criminal. This ownership is not made void by the sinner's flight. He may break the relationship he sustains to God, but he cannot break the obligation. There is but one thing conceded to him—that is the right of appeal. He may run to Christ, who is the partner of God, and through His intercession seek mercy. Jesus receives him. He comforts him. Not only so, but He manumits him by adoption—begets him in bonds as His own son. And then He sends him back to the Father to be received as Himself, and He says, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that on my account;" and with His own signature, written in blood, He says, "I will repay." The reception of the sinner is exceedingly abundant—more than he can ask or think.

ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

April 3.

SIN IN THE HEART.

YOU mean to be true; but once your truth sleeps on its guard, and the Edomite is over the valley, and the lie is right in the very midst of your well-guarded truthfulness. You love humility; but some day your humility keeps a careless feast

of self-confidence, and before you know it the shout of the invader Pride is in your ears. How evil crowds you! You cannot fight it out at once and have it done. You go on quietly for days, and think the enemy is dead. Just when you are safest, there he is again, more alive than ever. It is the Saviour's word, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves;" only the sheep and the wolf are both within us—Judah, with Edom for ever at its gate.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 4.

MIGHTY TO SAVE.

THE whole work of the Saviour has relation to and issues from the fact of sin. If there had been no sin there would have been no Saviour. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." He comes from the right direction, and He has an attractive majesty of movement as He first appears.....The Saviour comes in the strength of righteousness. Righteousness is at the bottom of all things. Righteousness is thorough. It is the very spirit of unsparing truth. Any reform or salvation of which the power is righteousness must go down to the very root of the trouble, must extenuate and cover over nothing, must expose and convict completely, in order that it may completely heal. And this is the power of

the salvation of Christ. It makes no compromise between the good and the evil, between Judah and Edom. Edom must be destroyed, not parleyed with; sin must be beaten down, and not conciliated; good must thrive by the defeat and not merely by the tolerance of evil.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 5.

THE MIND OF CHRIST.

SIN divides us from our fellow-creatures. Grace brings them together—teaches them to dwell together in love. So there comes into our life sympathy with the joys and the sorrows of others. If we have in us “the same mind that was in Christ,” who was for us the “Man of sorrows,” we shall be ready to bring what comfort we can to mourners. Nor shall we confine our tender regards to those of our own circle, but we shall draw near to those “of low estate.” How much envy and dislike of the rich would be kept away if the apostolic counsel were acted on by all!

JOHN HALL.

April 6.

THE DUTY OF SUFFERING.

NO duty of doing frightens and dismays the human soul like the duty of mere suffering. I know nothing that will so cow and crush a strong,

well man, with the red blood riotous in his full veins, as a certain conviction coming suddenly upon him that he is to be a poor, miserable, dependent invalid all the rest of his days until he dies. Nothing makes a man cry out to die like that. It is the most terrible sight one ever sees. And then it is the most beautiful sight one ever sees. As the man lies there in his misery, out of the darkness comes his past and reads itself to him. Each bright old year of health comes with its message of God's unforgetting love.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 7.

GIVING UP ALL.

EVERY man who desires the pearl of great price must sacrifice his all to buy it. It is not enough to see the beauty and the glory and almost to taste the joy of this wonderful life; you must become the possessor of it. The man had found and seen, desired and rejoiced in, the pearl of great price; but he did not have it until he gave up everything and bought it.

You cannot live every day in perfect fellowship with God without giving up time to it. Hours, and days, and weeks, and months, and years are gladly given up by men and women to perfect themselves in some profession or accomplishment. Do you expect that religion is so cheap that with-

out giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You cannot. But, my brothers and sisters, this pearl is worth everything. If you find that there is a struggle within the heart, never mind. By God's grace, if you will lie at His feet, you may depend upon it deliverance will come.

ANDREW MURRAY

April 8.

PERSONALITY.

EVERY man who is a Christian must live a Christian life that is peculiarly his own. Every candle of the Lord must utter its peculiar light ; only the true individuality of faith is marked by these characteristics which rescue it from bigotry : first, that it does not add something to the universal light, but only brings out most strongly some aspect of it which is specially its own ; second, that it always cares more about the essential light than about the peculiar way in which it utters it ; and third, that it easily blends with other special utterances of the universal light, in cordial sympathy and recognition of the value which it finds in them. Let these characteristics be in every man's religion, and then the individuality of faith is an inestimable gain.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 9.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

THE Hebrews must have been familiar with the Twenty-third Psalm, and so might well ponder the Saviour's words when He proclaims Himself the good Shepherd. And oh, how thankful we should be, wandering, weak, dependent as we are, that we have such a Shepherd who knows us, cares for us, and who guards and provides for us here and hereafter. Let us hear His voice, follow Him, and not any stranger; and let us think much of the one fold. We are in one company, with Christ for leader, to be gathered into the one fold above. Let us maintain brotherly love.

JOHN HALL.

April 10.

IN THE BRIGHT DAYS.

WE need Christ just as much in our bright, prosperous, exalted hours as in the days of darkness, adversity, and depression. We are quite in danger of thinking that religion is only for sickrooms and funerals, and for times of great sorrow and trial—a lamp to shine at night, a staff to help when the road is rough, a friendly hand to hold us up when we are stumbling. This is not true. Jesus went to the marriage-feast as well as to the home of sorrow. His religion is just as

much for our hours of joy as for our days of grief. There are just as many stars in the sky at noon as at midnight, although we cannot see them in the sun's glare. And there are just as many comforts, promises, divine encouragements, and blessings above us when we are in the noons of our human gladness and earthly success, as when we are in our nights of pain and shadow. We may not see them in the brightness about us, but they are there, and their benedictions fall upon us as perpetually, in a gentle rain of grace.

J. R. MILLER.

April 11.

LIFE'S LESSONS.

DIFFICULTIES are a part of our discipline. Canaan lies on the other side of both the Red Sea and the Jordan. We need not cross either of them till we come to them. God can divide the big sea as easily as He can dry up the little river. When we come to the sea, the voice of Providence is, "Go forward," and the waters part asunder. When we reach the flowing Jordan, and our feet touch the stream, behold, it has vanished, and we go through dry-shod! The story of Christian faith and its divine deliverances reads like a romance. When we voyagers get safely into the "desired haven" up yonder, we may take

great comfort in looking over our log-books, and in discovering how wonderfully our Helmsman brought us through dark nights and dangerous channels.

CUYLER.

April 12.

IMPEDIMENTA.

IF you must pass through what is even a desert to get to fertile, smiling lands beyond, still it is not good to count even the desert a mere necessary evil to get through and be forgotten as soon as possible. It is good, as you plod through the sand, to feed your eyes with the vastness and simplicity of the world which the monotony of sky and sand can most impressively display to you. So, if God has appointed to any of us times of solitude and friendlessness, let us pray that we may not pass through them, however dreary they may be, without bringing from them greater conceptions of Him, and of our fellow-men, and of ourselves.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 13.

HOME INFLUENCE.

SHOW me the home of a boy, and I will prophesy concerning his future without a tremor of uncertainty. Show me a man's home, and I can account for his peculiarities, his cheerfulness, or his despair.

A quiet home, on whose altar the flame of love and confidence never goes out, is as close to heaven as mortals can get this side the grave. A home which lacks love and confidence breeds germs of misery, which multiply until ruin has done its awful work.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

April 14.

COVERING SIN.

THERE are two ways of covering sin—man's way and God's way. *You* cover your sins, and they will have a resurrection some time; let *God* cover them, and neither devil nor man can find them. There are four expressions in the Bible with regard to where God puts sins. He puts them "behind His back." If God has forgiven me, who shall bring a charge against me? "He has blotted them out as a thick cloud." You see a cloud to-night, and to-morrow there isn't a cloud to be seen. "He casts them into the depths of the sea." Some one has said, "Thank God that it is a sea and not a river; a river might dry up, but the sea cannot." The greatest blessing that ever comes to me this side of heaven is when God forgives me. Have you been forgiven? The fourth expression is that He removes them "as far as the east is from the west." Do you know how far that is? Perhaps some good mathematician will figure that up. "If

we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Then make sure that you are forgiven.

D. L. MOODY.

April 13.

AT THE DOOR.

IN Holman Hunt's great picture, called "The Light of the World," we see One with patient, gentle face, standing at a door which is ivy-covered, as if long closed. He is girt with the priestly breastplate. He bears in His hand the lamp of truth. He stands and knocks. There is no answer, and He still stands and knocks. His eye tells of love; His face beams with yearning. You look closely, and you perceive that there is no knob or latch on the outside of the door. It can be opened only from within.

Do you not see the meaning? The Spirit of God comes to your heart's door and knocks. He stands there while storms gather and break upon His unsheltered head, while the sun declines, and night comes on with its chills and its heavy dews. He waits and knocks, but you must open the door yourself. The only latch is inside.

J. R. MILLER.

April 13.

THE TRUE LIFE.

TO feed on Christ is to get His strength into us to be our strength. You feed on the cornfield, and then go and build your house ; and it is the cornfield in your strong arm that builds the house, that cuts down the trees and piles the stone and lifts the roof into its place. You feed on Christ, and then go and live your life ; and it is Christ in you that lives your life, that helps the poor, that tells the truth, that fights the battle, and that wins the crown.

But what is this strength of Christ that comes to us? It is His character, His strength, His purity, His truth, His mercifulness—in one word, His holiness, the perfectness of His moral life. That is the inner strength. That is the strength of food.

And notice how this last alone is vital. It alone makes life. It lives. The buttress keeps the dead wall standing, but the sap makes the live tree still more alive with growth. So compulsion and fear keep us true to duty, but love makes us larger, and fit for greater duty every day. Every vital strength must be the strength which incorporates itself with the very being of the thing that it supports. Except we eat, we can have no life in us.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 17.

THE WAITING SOUL.

THE Lord is the hearer of prayer. There should be waiting on Him, not only in the assembly of His people, not only with the attitude of reverent regard, in the forms of religion, but as the Psalmist puts it: "Truly my soul waiteth upon God." For salvation, for protection, He is to be sought; and whatever the trouble of our lives, we thus get stability. What can we ask? The fulfilment of the exceeding great and precious promises. But what plea can we present, weak and sinful as we are? The name that is above every name—the name of Jesus.

JOHN HALL.

April 18.

VESSELS FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

WE talk about being "filled with the Spirit," yet Paul goes beyond that in Ephesians iii. 14, where he says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ..... that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be"—filled with? No; "that ye might be *filled into* all the fulness of God." Do you not see the difference? Here are empty

vessels. You say, "First get yourself empty and then full." I may dip out and fill these vessels; but put an empty vessel into the ocean, and it quickly fills itself. This seems to be Paul's thought. Archbishop Leighton makes a beautiful comment on the words of Christ: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The archbishop, lifting up his eyes to heaven, said, "Lord Jesus, it is only a little joy that now enters into us; but by-and-by we shall enter into joy as vessels put into a sea of happiness." Cast yourself into the great deeps of the Spirit; then there will be no trouble in getting filled.

A. J. GORDON.

April 19.

THE PRAYER THAT HAS POWER.

WHAT is prayer? Has every prayer power with God? Let us endeavour to get some clear ideas on that point. Some people seem to regard prayer as the rehearsal of a set form of solemn words, learned largely from the Bible or a liturgy, and when uttered they are only from the throat outward. Genuine prayer is a believing soul's *direct converse with God*. Phillips Brooks has condensed it into four words—a "true wish sent Godward." By it adoration, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and petition for mercies and gifts ascend to the throne, and by means of it infinite blessings are brought down from heaven. The pull of our

prayer may not move the everlasting throne, but—like the pull on a line from the bow of a boat—it may draw us into closer fellowship with God and fuller harmony with His wise and holy will.

CUYLER.

April 20.

CONDITIONS TO BESTOWMENT.

NONE of God's promises are unconditional; and we have no such assets to our credit that we have a right to draw our cheques and demand that God shall pay them. The indispensable quality of all right asking is a *right spirit toward our heavenly Father*. When a soul feels an entire submissiveness toward God that it delights in seeing Him reign and His glory advanced, it may fearlessly pour out its desires; for then the desires of God and the desires of that sincere, submissive soul will *agree*. God loves to give to them who love to let Him have His way; they find their happiness in the chime of their own desires with the will of God.

CUYLER.

April 21.

SHELTERED AND SECURE.

MANY of us find life hard and full of pain. The world uses us rudely and roughly. We suffer wrongs and injuries. Other people's clumsy feet tread upon our tender spirits. We

must endure misfortunes, trials, disappointments. We cannot avoid these things ; but we should not allow the harsh experiences to deaden our sensibilities, or make us stoical or sour. The true problem of living is to keep our hearts sweet and gentle in the hardest conditions and experiences.

If you remove the snow from the hillside in the late winter, you will find sweet flowers growing there, beneath the cold drifts, unhurt by the storm and by the snowy blankets that have covered them. So should we keep our hearts tender and sensitive beneath life's fiercest winter-blasts, and through the longest years of suffering and even of injustice and wrong treatment. That is true, victorious living.

J. R. MILLER.

April 22.

"CAREFUL FOR NOTHING."

HOW many need a cure for care ! The burdened man of business, the anxious parent, the struggling toiler, the perplexed man of affairs—all need some counsellor that can be trusted, and some helper that can be relied upon. God is the One to whom to go "in everything." Thanksgiving is to be joined with the prayer, for even the most burdened have blessings here and hereafter. Pray in faith ; then comes peace, different from what the world gives, with its pleasures, its promises, and its opiates, and that peace keeps the heart as

brave soldiers keep the citadel. And all "through Christ Jesus"—blessed be His name!

JOHN HALL.

April 23.

COMMON THINGS GLORIFIED.

OUR Lord calls His people always to be helpers in blessing this world. We cannot do much. The best we can bring is a little of the common water of earth; but if we bring that to Him, He can change it into the rich wine of heaven, which will bless weary and fainting ones. If we take simply what we have and use it as He commands, it will do good. Moses had only a rod in his hand, but with this he wrought great wonders. The disciples had only five barley-loaves, but these, touched by Christ's hand, made a feast for thousands. The common water, carried by the servants, under the Master's benediction became wine for the wedding.

J. R. MILLER.

April 24.

TO WAKE—NOT SLEEP.

THE world is growing better—I know it. A great unceasing movement toward truth and goodness is carrying slowly forward ever the character of this great, mighty, mysterious humanity. How slow it is, but oh, how real it is the study of the ages tells. And yet behold how the

good causes fail ! Behold how selfishness comes in to paralyze each great endeavour for the good of man ! Alas for him who only sees this surface fact—who does not feel beneath it all the heave and movement of the whole race forward toward goodness, toward God ! To him who hears at once the tumult of moral failures all around him, and the steady progress of the great moral success beneath him—to him the world becomes solemn and beautiful, pathetic and full of hope. For him despairing pessimism and silly optimism both become impossible. A divine optimism, which, while it dares not say, “Whatever is is best,” devoutly says, “The best is strongest, and shall ultimately conquer and use even the worst,” becomes the habit of his life. Such was the optimism of Jesus. Such is the optimism of His disciples if they catch His spirit.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 25.

“HE THAT IS FAITHFUL.”

THE broken edges everywhere ! The half-finished tasks that men have to leave and go into the darkness ! The young careers so full of promise that suddenly stop ! The great ideas and wishes, growing legitimately out of earthly life, yet evidently too large for it, finding no satisfaction here ! And most of all the unfinished characters ! I can

think that it is no great thing for a man to die with his fortune half made or his barn half built ; but that he should die just as his character is rounding into shape, and from a crude study becoming a picture of beauty and an engine of power, this is what most bewilders us. This is what most of all, I think, has made men guess that this earthly life we see is a part and not a whole, and set their eyes pathetically searching for that other world they thought must be beyond the waters.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 26.

GROWING GODWARD.

THE true faith which a man has kept up to the end of his life must be one that has opened with his growth, and constantly won new reality and colour from his changing experience.....It is the field that once held the seed, now waving and rustling under the autumn wind with the harvest that it holds, yet all the time it has kept the corn. The joy of his life has richened his belief ; his sorrow has deepened it ; his doubts have sobered it ; his enthusiasms have fired it ; his labour has purified it. His doctrines are like the house that he has lived in, rich with associations which make it certain that he will never move out of it. His doctrines have been illustrated and strengthened

and endeared by the good help they have given to his life. And no doctrine that has not done this can be really held up to the end with any such vital grasp as will enable us to carry it with us through the river, and enter with it into the new life beyond.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 27.

HIDING SINS.

SINS unconfessed and not set straight are hindering a mighty work of God in many a man and woman to-day. David tried not confessing his sins to God, and we know the misery he experienced. He says in the Thirty-second Psalm, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me." At last he came to his senses : he confessed his transgressions, and the Lord forgave the iniquity of his sin. Then God wrought mightily in David, and the Thirty-second Psalm and the Fifty-first Psalm, and many another psalm that has comforted and edified the children of God for nearly three thousand years, are the result.

R. A. TORREY.

April 28.

DARE TO BE HAPPY.

EVERY now and then there are flashes of light upon the gospel page which let us see what a bright, sunny, and sympathetic life the Saviour

lived—how perfectly free from harshness and asceticism was that character, which, at the same time, carries a sweet and gentle seriousness and a robust earnestness with it wherever it went. “The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners,”—so Jesus Himself described one day the current impression that His life had made on the people of Jerusalem. The words are like an instantaneous photograph of that far-distant time.....In those words we can see friends and enemies alike busied with the strange life of Jesus, and only gradually finding out that it was they who were strange, and not He—gradually coming first to feel and then to understand that this life of His, so bright and yet so serious, so individual and yet so social, had reached completely what their lives were only crudely struggling after. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 29.

HE COMETH.

THIS Conqueror who comes, comes strong—
“travelling in the greatness of His strength.”
He has not left His might behind Him in the struggle. He is all ready, with the same strength with which He conquered, to enter in and rule and educate the nation He has saved. And so the Saviour has not done all when He has forgiven

you. By the same strength of love and patience which saved you upon Calvary He will come in, if you will let Him, and train your saved life into perfectness of grace and glory. He has conquered sin, so that you need not be its servant any longer. Now let Him conquer you by His great love, and so let His victory be complete.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

April 30.

ACCEPTED!

WE may well study the scenes of Calvary. They are the fulfilment of the prophecies of thousands of foregoing years. We may well listen to the words of the dying Saviour. He could promise Paradise, that day, to a dying penitent robber. He could say, "It is finished." We may glory in the cross—that is, we may put aside all our good qualities, our supposed righteousness, our church rites, everything but the death of Christ, as the foundation of our acceptance with God. We are, as it were, crucified with Him, so close is the union in God's eye. So we are accepted in the Beloved.

JOHN HALL.

May 1.

TREADING THE WINE-PRESS.

THE Saviour Himself, surely He is never so dear, never wins so utter and so tender a love, as when we see what it has cost Him to save

us.....Not merely has He conquered completely and conquered in suffering; He has conquered *alone*. As any one reads through the gospels, he feels how hopeless the attempt would be to tell of the loneliness of that life which Jesus lived. "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me. I looked, and there was none to help: therefore mine own arm brought salvation." He had friends, but we always feel how far off they stood from the deepest centre of His heart. He had disciples, but they never came into the inner circles of His self-knowledge. He had fellow-workers, but they only handed round the broken bread and fishes in the miracle, or ordered the guest chamber on the Passover night. They never came into the deepest work of His life. With the mysterious suffering that saved the world they had nothing to do.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 2.

DWELLING IN SAFETY.

TO learn what it is to be a genuine Christian, and why such a Christian does not go to wreck amid all the temptations of this present evil world, we need only go to our Bibles. In the thirty-third chapter of Isaiah we light, for example, on this grand description of the righteous man:

“He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” Every word of this is worth studying; it tells the secret of spiritual strength and security, and simply because there is a divine support and a divine supply.

CUYLER.

May 3.

MERCIES IN DISGUISE.

LIFE is given that we may learn how to live. Adversities accost us as knights of old rode against each other in the tournament, and we are either unhorsed because we have not steeled our muscles to meet the foe, or are victors because we can trust our swords and our good right arms.

Ill fortune is spiritually worth more than what we call good fortune. The rich man's son is apt to slide downhill, while the poor man's boy climbs to the top.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

May 4.

“NOT ALONE.”

“LO, I am with you alway.” We are not alone. The work is not ours, but His. The strength to do it is not to be called up out of the depths of ourselves, but taken down from the heights of Him.

As we hear the sound of His coming in all this

movement of Christian life around us, who is He that comes? A Wonder-worker to bring us forgiveness? A Truth-teacher to open heaven? Yes; but He is more than that if we will let Him be. He comes with His eternal heart of pity, which, when He gives it to us, becomes our new heart of trust.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 5.

MANY MANSIONS.

CHRIST had to prepare the disciples for parting with Him. He does this by the promise of reunion. It will not be in a strange land, but in His Father's house. There will be ample room—"many mansions." He has gone into that house—is there now, in His glory, and with His mediatorial power. In due time He will come and take them to be with Him, their spirits to be at home with the Lord, and in due time their bodies to be raised up and glorified. Oh, what a future is before the believer, though he be as poor and as despised by the world as the fishermen of Galilee!

JOHN HALL

May 6.

PERFECTING LIFE.

CHRIST saw all life in God. That means that He saw life in its completeness. No being ever saw the evil and misery as He beheld it.

He saw sin with all the intensity of holiness. But nobody ever has dared call Jesus Christ a pessimist. He saw the end from the beginning. He saw the depth from the surface. He saw the light from the darkness. He saw the whole from the parts. Therefore He could not despair. There was no curse of life upon His lips, but infinite pity—a pity that has folded itself around the world's torn and bleeding heart ever since, but no curse! And who are we, with our little feeble rage and petulance, flinging our testy curses where the Lord's blessing descended like the love of God?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 7.

THE CONQUEST OF LOVE.

A STORY is told of a child in Luther's time who had been taught to think of God only with dread, as of a terrible judge. In her stern home the name of God had been mentioned only to terrify and frighten her. But one day in her father's printing-office she picked up a scrap of paper, and found on it the first words of this verse, "God so loved the world that he gave—" The remaining words were torn off; but even in this mere fragment there was a new revelation to her. It told her that God loved the world, loved it well enough to give something. What He gave she did

not know, but it was a great deal for her to know that He loved the world enough to give anything to it. The new thought brought great joy to her heart. It changed all her conception of God. She learned to think of Him as one who loved her, as her friend, ready to give her rich gifts and all good, and this brightened and transformed her life. /

J. R. MILLER.

May 8.

EVERY DAY ITS DUTY.

PART of our duty, in addition to our secular affairs, is to do good in the ways that our divine Master may indicate, to perform the tasks of love and service that He may allot to us. All of our busy days, for example, we are to be gentle, kindly, patient, Christly, to every one whose life touches ours. In the heaviest pressure of our task-work we must never fail to do the kindness that we are called to do. We must never be too much occupied in this world's affairs to do the part of the good Samaritan, if by our path we find a wounded brother. We must get into every one of our days some work for Christ. We all remember the story of the king who counted that day lost in which some other life had not been made happier. That day is lost in a Christian's life which has no record of blessing to the world and glory to God.

J. R. MILLER.

May 9.

OUR EARTHLY HOUSE.

THE living soul is the important element in our nature. It is accommodated in the body. But the body is only an earthly house. Death takes the soul out of it. Is the believer's spirit then homeless? No indeed. There is "a building of God" into which it goes. And how great is the contrast between the condition of many a child of God here on earth and that in the Father's house above! "In this we groan," sometimes from languor and disease, sometimes from the sad bereavements of life—beloved ones are taken; sometimes from the sense of sin, the law in our members warring against the law in our minds. But the blessed change comes at length. Lord, let us be ready!

JOHN HALL.

May 10.

A DOOR OF HOPE.

A HINGE is a very small part of a door, yet it is a very important part; for on it turns the question whether the door be opened or shut. So the little word "but" is a very important hinge in that Bible text which tells us that "David was greatly distressed, but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." On the hinge of that word turns a door of hope to God's people in the darkest hour of trouble. David was not the only good

man who has been distressed ; his experience has been a universal one. Our heavenly Father has never promised to the best man or woman that their voyage of life shall be over smooth seas, without a "capful" of head winds. He so orders it that the precious things shall be costly things, and that the noblest life shall be one of conflicts, oppositions, trials, and often of severe discipline.

CUYLER.

May 11.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIFE.

THE springs of all issues, good and bad, are in the heart and mind. Give me a perfect body to begin with, and if God's laws are my laws I shall keep that body perfect to the end of life's pilgrimage.

No man is thoroughly acquainted with himself. There are depths and heights in his soul which he has never explored. In one environment he is a commonplace creature ; in another he develops into a hero. The possibility of greatness is hidden somewhere in every man's nature.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

May 12.

RESPONSIBILITY.

IN a true sense everything is a man's own which needs that man ; not everything which he needs, but everything which needs him. I pity

the man who does not know the responsibility and privilege of that high sort of ownership.

Every day the power that we will not use is falling from us. Every day the God whose voice speaks through all the inevitable necessities of our moral life is saying to the men who keep their talents wrapped in their napkins, "Take the talent from him."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 13.

LIFE NOT A FAILURE.

DO you know what it is to be failing every day, and yet to be sure—humbly but deeply sure—that your life is, as a whole, in its great movement and meaning, not failing, but succeeding? You want to do that best work that a man can do—to make life brighter and nobler for your fellow-men. Not a day passes in which you do not somehow try to do that blessed work; but every time you turn away after one of those attempts to give sympathy or inspiration to your brethren, how your heart sinks, so cold and so ignoble are the words which you meant to be so generous and warm! And yet all the while you know that the whole life does not fail. Still there is the purpose! It does not die. It is not given up. It presses forward, wounded and bleeding, but more and more determined every day. Every day it grows clearer and clearer to you that with-

out that wish and hope and resolution life would not be worth living. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 14.

LET LOVE ABOUND.

EVERY element in our nature is to be under the influence of grace, and we are bound to make the best use of every faculty. We have affections. They are to be set on things above. They are also to go out towards the rest of the redeemed family. They are to become stronger as life advances. Our love is to "abound." We have understanding. It is to be exercised in reliance on divine guidance. How often we make mistakes in our own wisdom, and then wonder why Providence sends us the troubles these mistakes occasioned! Let us approve things that are excellent, and then we shall have no stumbling-block ("offence") in our own minds or before others.

JOHN HALL.

May 15.

NOT LEFT ALONE.

AS you sit thinking of man's fragmentariness, his certainty of death, his doubt about a future, let this voice come to you, a voice clear with personality, and sweet and strong with love: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and am alive for evermore." "He that liveth!" And at once

your fragment of life falls into its place in the eternity of life that is bridged by His being. "He that was dead!" And at once death changes from the terrible end of life into a most mysterious but no longer terrible experience of life. "He that is alive for evermore!" And not merely is there a future beyond the grave, but it is inhabited by One who speaks to us, who went there by the way that we must go, who sees us and can help us as we make our way along, and will receive us when we come there.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 16.

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS.

THERE is something very beautiful to me in the truth that suffering, rightly used, is not a cramping, binding, restricting of the human soul, but a setting of it free. It is not a violation of the natural order; it is only a more or less violent breaking open of some abnormal state that the natural order may be resumed. It is the opening of a cage door. It is the breaking in of a prison wall. This is the thought of those fine old lines of an early English poet:—

"The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made,
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 17.

GOD FIRST LOVED US.

TO know that long before I cared for Him, He cared for me; that while I wandered up and down in carelessness, perhaps while I was plunging deep in flagrant sin, God's eye was never off me for a moment, He was always watching for the instant when His hand might touch me and His voice might speak to me,—there is nothing which can appeal to a man like that. The man is stone whom that does not appeal to. When, touched by the knowledge of that untiring love, a man gives himself at last to God, every act of loving service which he does afterwards is fired and coloured by the power of gratitude, surprised gratitude, out of which it springs. How shall he overtake this love, which has so much the start of him?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 18.

SURRENDER OF SELF.

THERE are many, very many Christians who are afraid of making an unreserved surrender to God. They are afraid that God will ask some hard thing of them, or some absurd thing. They fear sometimes that it will upset all their life-plans. In a word, they are afraid to surrender unreservedly to the will of God, for Him to do all

He wishes to for them and whatsoever He wills with them. Friends, the will of God concerning us is not only the wisest and best thing in the world; it is also the tenderest and sweetest. God's will for us is not only more loving than a father's; it is more tender than a mother's. It is true that God does oftentimes revolutionize utterly our life-plans when we surrender ourselves to His will. It is true that He does require of us things that to others seem hard. But when the will is once surrendered, the revolutionized life-plans become just the plans that are most pleasant, and the things that to others seem hard are just the things that are easiest and most delightful. Do not let Satan deceive you into being afraid of God's plans for your life.

R. A. TORREY.

May 19.

"WISE UNTO SALVATION."

WISDOM that shines like a star in the forehead, wisdom that wraps the form with dignity like a mantle, wisdom that burns with eloquence upon the lips—these all men cannot have. If these are the true successes of a human life, then most human lives must be failures. But wisdom that enters as salvation into the heart all men may have.

As Christ, by His self-sacrifice, entered into the

company of man, so there is a self-surrender by which man enters into the company of Christ.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 20.

WE KNOW IN PART.

THE blessings of the divine grace which we enjoy in this world are little more than the husks of the heavenly good things, sent down on the river of divine grace, as revealings and foretastes and intimations of what is in store for us in heaven. The peace we get here is very sweet, but it is only a faint image and prophecy of the peace of heaven. The joy the Christian has on earth is deep and rich, but it is only the beginning of what he shall experience in glory. Heaven's life is infinitely deeper and richer than this world's. The communion of earth is very precious as we turn over the Bible pages and ponder its words, or sit at the Lord's table; but it is only the shadow of the blessed and perfect fellowship of heaven, when we shall see Jesus as He is and be satisfied.

J. R. MILLER.

May 21.

PUT ON CHRIST.

YOU never can drive out the uncleanness of evil thoughts except by pouring in the clean wholesomeness of the thoughts of Christ. Have

you made Christ for any length of time the one object of your thought? Try it, you men who want to break loose from the shackles that you know are keeping you away from the great blessing of God and from the pure sweetness of His free and holy life. What else is there to think about that is worth anything, compared with Him? All treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him. How it must grieve Him, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, to see us filling our minds with passing things, worthless things, dying after the fashion of the world, while Christ is crowded away into some bare and paltry place in our lives!

ROBERT E. SPEER.

May 22.

THE MAN OF TWO TALENTS.

THIS quiet, commonplace, unnoticed man, going his faithful way in his dull dress which makes no mark and draws no eye, doing his duty insignificantly and thoroughly, winning so unobtrusively at last his master's praise, ought to be interesting to us all.

He ought to be interesting, because he represents so much the largest element in universal human life. The average man is by far the most numerous man. The man who goes beyond the average, the man who falls short of the average, both of

them, by their very definition, are exceptions. They are the outskirts and fringes, the capes and promontories, of humanity. The great continent of human life is made up of the average existences, the mass of two-talented capacity and action.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 23.

GOD WANTS OUR BEST.

CHRIST never asks for anything we cannot do. But let us not forget that He always does expect and require of each of us the best we can do. The faithfulness Christ wants and approves implies the doing of all our work, our business, our trade, our daily toil, as well as we can. Let no one think that religion does not apply to private life. It applies to the way you do your most common work just as really as to your praying and keeping of the commandments. Whatever your duty is, you cannot be altogether faithful to God unless you do your best. To slur any task is to do God's work badly; to neglect it is to rob God. The universe is not quite complete without your work well done, however small that work may be.

J. R. MILLER.

May 24.

BLESSED ARE THE HUNGRY.

THORWALDSEN wrought long and with earnest enthusiasm upon his statue of the Christ; but when at last it was completed, a deep sadness settled over him. When asked the reason for this, he replied, "This is the first of my works with which I have ever felt satisfied. Till now my ideal has always been far beyond what I could execute; but it is no longer so. I shall never have a great idea again." Satisfaction with his work was to him the sure indication that he had reached his best achievement. He would grow no more, because there was now no longing in his soul for anything better. He recognized this, and hence his pain of heart.

In all life this law applies. Hunger is a mark of health, and the want of appetite proclaims disease. The cessation of the desire for knowledge shows that intellectual growth has ended. So, in spiritual life, unsatisfaction is the token of health. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."

J. R. MILLER.

May 25.

ALL TRUE WORK GREAT.

THERE are those who seem to be doomed to most earthly toil, just to be conscientious, and upright, and thorough, and true. It seems

as if that were everything for them. There are other men whose souls leap to triumphant thoughts, and whose eyes are open to ecstatic visions..... These two sorts of men belong together, make one world, are serving the purposes of one God, and making ready one celestial kingdom, and deserve each the other's whole-souled respect. It is not that the lesser man is making his life successful by making possible a higher life which some other man may live, though that is much. It is that in this universe, where natural and spiritual succeed and minister to one another, he who at any spot is doing good work of any kind is serving the universal Master and contributing to the universal success.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 26.

EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

FORSAKE dangerous associations. Health is not contagious, but sickness is. We quarantine yellow fever to keep it out of the country, but we do not bring in health or quarantine it. Sin is catching; holiness is not. Be very careful to whom you give the key of your heart. Look out! This association, with us imitative creatures, has a tremendous influence on a man's or a woman's Christian character. Lot bought real estate down near Sodom; pitched his tent over against Sodom. Then he moved into Sodom, and pretty soon Sodom

moved into him. The angel put a hand on his shoulder, and said, "Escape for thy life, lest thou be consumed." That is the only way for any one to get out of dangerous associations in business, in politics, or anything else. Christians, the moment you find that you are in any associations that harm and poison your piety, escape out of that place as quickly as Lot hastened out of Sodom, for there is no safety in remaining there.

CUYLER.

May 27.

THE CROSS AND THE CROWN.

IN all of Christ's associations the same inevitable mingling of the sad and glad appears. There was a little family at Bethany in which He often made His home, and the last time He left the hospitable door He carried out with Him two memories—the memory of how the eyes of Mary had looked up into His face, eager with the desire to understand all His sacred truth, and the memory of how the same eyes had streamed with tears beside her brother's tomb. The same voices of the populace at Jerusalem which cried, "Hosanna!" cried, "Crucify him!" before the week was done.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 28.

GRANT THY PEACE.

IF we are really Christ's, then back into the very bosom of His Father where Christ is hid, there He will carry us. We too shall look out, and be as calm and as independent as He is. The needs of men shall touch us just as keenly as they touch Him, but the sneers and strifes of men shall pass us by as they pass by Him and leave no mark on His unruffled life.....For us, just as for Him, this will not mean a cold and selfish separation from our brethren. We shall be infinitely closer to their real life when we separate ourselves from their outside strifes and superficial pride, and know and love them truly by knowing and loving them in God.

This is the power and progress of true Christianity. It leads us into, it abounds in peace. It is a brave, vigorous peace, full of life, full of interest and work. It is a peace that means thoroughness, that refuses to waste its force and time in little superficial tumults which come to nothing, while there is so much real work to be done, so much real help to be given, and such a real life to be lived with God. That peace, His peace, may Jesus give to us all.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

May 29.

THAT WE BE HOLY.

PRAISE may well be given to God, even in times of trouble. He gives all spiritual blessings, and they often come through trials. Tribulation worketh patience. But though our conditions change He does not. His choice was made before the foundation of the world, and He is unchangeable. He meant us to be holy, and He uses the needful means to this high end. Christ believed: that is the basis of our pardon. Christ loved and served: that is sanctification. The Father chose; the Son redeemed; the Spirit makes holy. We may well sing a doxology.

JOHN HALL.

May 30.

AIM HIGH.

IN these days there is a great deal of lowering the standards. Business men tell me that business standards have been lowered, and now a good deal of business runs into gambling. In politics the standards have been lowered. There has been a lowering of standards in theology and in reference to the supreme authority of God's blessed Book. We must keep the standard up to the very tiptop peak of God's flagstaff. Be careful, my brother, about lowering your standard

of right, obedience, and holiness. You remember, perhaps, that scene in the days of conflict when a colour-sergeant had carried the colours so near to the enemy's redoubt that the regiment shouted to him to bring them back, or they would be captured. The colour-sergeant said, "No, no ; bring your men up to the colours !" With a magnificent dash they carried the colours themselves into the rampart. The commandment of the Captain of our salvation to us ministers is, "Bring my church up to my colours, and then we will go forward and capture the enemy."

CUYLER.

May 31.

GOD KNOWS ME.

"**T**HE Father knoweth me." That means, "God has a will for every act of mine." What, then, can "I know the Father" mean, except, "In every act of mine I do the Father's will"? Obedience becomes the organ and utterance—nay, becomes the substance and reality—of knowledge on the side of him who is aware that in this more special sense God knows him. I think of Jesus on that day when He called Lazarus back from the dead to life. He travels all the way from Galilee to Bethany. At last He stands beside the tomb. His soul is full of sympathy. The dreadfulness of death oppresses Him. Then He becomes aware of

a will of God.....Behold, He lifts His head! His face shines like the sun! The gloom is gone! He stretches out His hand! He opens His lips with the cry of life, "Lazarus, come forth!" "And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 1.

IGNORANCE AND KNOWLEDGE.

THOUGHT and the struggle after truth are the best joys of the best men. To follow out the lines of speculation and of revelation until they lead us near the heart of things, which yet we know that we can never perfectly reach; to make some few steps forward on the journey which stretches out before us, endlessly tempting and interesting, into eternity; to add each day some new stone to the structure whose lines already, as they leave the earth, prophesy an infinite height for the far topstone—he has not lived who has not felt this pleasure. He is not really living, however full he may be of warmth of feeling and of energy in action, who does not in some degree know what it is to crave ideas and knowledge, to seek for truth, and to delight in finding it.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 2.

OUR BEST.

THERE is no warrant for carelessness or self-sufficiency in the smallest thing we may be called upon to do for God. A young divinity student in Ireland was preaching for the Bishop of Cashel. As they went into the pulpit, the good bishop asked the young student what he would preach about. He replied that he had made no preparation, and that he was quite uncertain, but was confident that he could occupy the time, as he was just from the university. After two or three minutes of labour over a text glibly given out, he broke down in confusion, and the bishop was obliged to finish the sermon. When they came back to the vestry, the young man buried his face in his hands and groaned in shame and humiliation. "My young brother," said the bishop, "if you had gone up as you came down, you would have come down as you went up."

D. W. WHITTLE.

June 3.

WATCH AND PRAY.

OUR Lord's temptation makes us see that temptation is not sin, nor does it necessarily involve sin. Christ was sinless, and yet tempted; therefore it is possible for man to be

tempted, and yet sinless. Now so many of us, the moment we are strongly tempted, seem to fall into a sort of demoralized condition, as if our innocence were over, as if the charm were broken and we were already sinners; and so we too often give ourselves up easily to the sin.....To any soul in such a state what could we say but this: "Look up and see the truth in Jesus; do you not see it there? To be tempted is not wicked, is not shameful, is not unworthy even of Him. It is the lot—in one view it is even the glory—of humanity. Sin does not begin, and shame does not begin, until the will gives way—until you yield to temptation. Stand guard over that will, resist temptation, and then to have been tempted shall be to you what it was to your Saviour—a glory and a crown, a part of your history worthy to be written with thanksgiving in the Book of Life, as His is written in His book of life." Is not this the strength and courage that many a soul needs?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 4.

APPRECIATION TOO LATE.

IT is not enough to love others; we must let them know that we love them. We must do it, too, before it is too late. Some people wait till the need is past, and then come up with their

kindness. When the neighbour is well again, they call to say how sorry they are he has been sick. When he has gotten through his sore trial, they come with congratulations. But the time to help is when your friend is in the floods, not when he has gotten out to shore and is safe. The time for friendship is in the friend's adversity, when evil tongues malign him, and not when he has gotten vindication and stands honoured even by strangers.

J. R. MILLER.

June 3.

"HID WITH CHRIST."

JUST as the children's lives set themselves into the life of their father, which seems to them really eternal—just as the leaves coming and going, growing and dropping, find their reason and consistency in the long, unchanging life of the tree on which they grow—so our lives find their place in this long, unchanging life of Christ, and lose the vexation of their own ever-shifting pasts and futures in the perpetual present of His being. It is the thought of an eternal God that really gives consistency to the fragmentary lives of men, the fragmentary history of the world. A Christ that liveth redeems and rescues into His eternity the broken, temporary lives and works of His disciples.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 6.

BY THE WATER-COURSES.

THE book of nature is to be studied. It often throws light on the book of revelation. How much there is under our eyes to recall our bountiful Creator ! The timely rain, the gentle dew, and the spreading green all suggest the growth of tree, and grass and grain, and the coming harvest. The Divine Spirit comes like showers, and God's people grow and bear fruit. Let us thirst for God, who "shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." Let us praise, trust, and glorify this personal, omnipotent, and everlasting Father, who "sendeth forth his Spirit, and reneweth the face of the earth."

JOHN HALL (*adapted*).

June 7.

GOD'S STANDARD.

COURAGE in all the worlds is the same courage. Truth before the throne of God is the same thing as when neighbour talks with neighbour on the street. Mercy will grow tenderer and finer, but will be the old blessed balm of life in the fields of eternity that it was in your workshop and your home. Unselfishness will expand and richen till it unfolds the life like sunshine ; but it will be the same self-denial, opening into a richer self-indulgence, which it was when it

first stole in with one thin sunbeam on the startled soul. There is no new world of virtues in any heaven or in any heavenly experience of life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 8.

BEARING RIGHT ON.

ONE of the worst evils wrought by the sin of discouragement is that we are tempted to stop when we are just on the eve of realized success, and almost in sight of the richest blessings. Up near the summit of Mount Washington I once saw a cairn of stones, to mark the spot where a poor girl perished from exposure and heart failure on a cold night. She and her father had rashly attempted to ascend the mountain without a guide, and they had become lost, and had sat down bewildered when the chilling darkness of the autumnal night came on. The next morning the distracted father discovered that a very short distance more would have brought him in sight of the lights from the windows of the "Tiptop" cabin! Here is a bit of a parable to illustrate how those who are doing not rash things but wise things may be tempted to lose heart, and to relax their efforts when they are almost in sight of success.....God puts dark hours before day-dawn to test faith; hard fields are the very ones that ought not to be abandoned.

CUYLER.

June 9.

REASON AND FAITH.

GOD has made us with two eyes, both intended to be used so as to see one object. Binocular vision is the perfection of sight. There is a corresponding truth in the spiritual sphere. We have two faculties for the apprehension of spiritual truth—*reason* and *faith*: the former intellectual, the latter largely intuitive, emotional. Reason asks, How? wherefore? Faith accepts testimony, and rests upon the person who bears witness.

Now reason and faith often seem in conflict, but are not. Reason prepares the way for faith, and then both act jointly. We are not called to exercise blind faith, but to be ready always to give answer to every man who asks a reason.

There are three questions which belong to reason to answer: First, Is the Bible the Book of God? second, What does it teach? third, What relation has its teaching to my duty? When these are settled, faith accepts the Word as authoritative, and no longer stumbles at its mysteries, but rather expects that God's thoughts will be above our thoughts. Thus, where reason's province ends faith's begins.

ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

June 10.

KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE.

THERE are anxieties in life of which, in some cases, we cannot speak even to our closest friends on earth. But there is a Friend above into whose hands we can put all, and peace follows. So He is to be trusted, not self in any form, and not worldly wisdom. Let the mind be stayed on Him. Have we enemies to our souls? He can help us to conquer them. Have we troubles about means? He will provide, and where He leaves the straits it is to help us to appreciate the true riches. Are we painfully conscious of our weakness? In Him, blessed be His name! is everlasting strength.

JOHN HALL.

June 11.

TRUE PHILOSOPHY.

IF we can live in Christ and have His life in us, shall not the spiritual balance and proportion which were His become ours too? If He were really our Master and our Saviour, could it be that we could get so eager and excited over little things? If we were His, could we possibly be wretched over the losing of a little money which we do not need, or be exalted at the sound of a little praise which we know that we only half deserve and that the praisers only half intend?

A moment's disappointment, a moment's gratification, and then the ocean would be calm again and quite forgetful of the ripple which disturbed its bosom.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 12.

A VISION OF LIFE.

LIFE is not life, freedom is not freedom, unless the live thing is set in the ground of its true nourishment, and keeps open the connection with the eternal source of its strength. Man is not living except as he lives in God.

I must have some notion in general of what I am alive for, or I cannot live rightly from hour to hour this evening and to-morrow morning..... Ten thousand men become machines from too narrow, where one becomes visionary from too large, theories of life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 13.

UNCONSCIOUS GOODNESS.

IF you are abiding in Christ, you are reproducing yourself in thousands of instances when you are wholly unaware of it. Out of the personal relationship between the soul and Christ come the fruits of holy living. The vine does not bear fruit of itself; it bears its fruit through the branches. Our unconscious influence thus becomes far more

fruitful than our conscious influence. In the last great day many will bewail that they have accomplished so little, and, looking at the scanty results, will say, "When saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink?" to find that unconsciously their lives had abounded in fruits well pleasing in the Master's sight. It is from such holy lives as this that is derived our Master's highest joy. It is when the whole body of Christ becomes instinct with His Spirit that the world is made conscious of His divine headship over the church.

BISHOP HENDRIX.

June 14.

THE WATCHFUL EYE.

GO where we may, we cannot get away from the calm, clear gaze of the divine Eye. Neither in the blue depths of the heavens nor in the dark abysses of the grave can one hide away from God. If we could take the morning sunbeams for wings and fly away on them with all the swiftness of light to the remotest bounds of space, we could not get beyond the reach of the divine Eye. If we creep into the darkness—darkness so deep and dense that no human eye can behold us—still God sees us as clearly as if we stood in the bright noon-day sunshine. Darkness hides not from Him; night shines to His eye as brightly as day.

When we know that God loves us, there is infinite comfort in this thought of His unsleeping watchfulness. It is our Father who watches. There ought also to be wondrous incitement and inspiration in this consciousness: while the Eye of divine love is looking upon us we should always do our best.

J. R. MILLER.

June 13.

WHO LEADETH HIS OWN.

NO language can be strong enough to express our obligations to Him who leadeth His people "like a flock." We look back over the past. What blessings He gave! what woes He kept away! Left to ourselves we should have been wandering sheep and in the power of the wolves. He fed, led, and preserved us. But more than this: the good Shepherd gave His life for us. We have to add the gifts of grace to the endless list of providential favours. We may well say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." Let us make life in the future a glad doxology.

JOHN HALL.

June 16.

THE DEVIL'S LIE.

THE great tempter of men has two lies with which he plies us at two different stages. Before we have fallen he tells us that one fall does

not matter; it is a trifle—we can easily recover ourselves again. After we have fallen he tells us that it is hopeless; we are given over to sin, and need not attempt to rise.

It is a terrible falsehood to say that to fall once does not matter. Even by one fall there is something lost that can never be recovered again. It is like the breaking of an infinitely precious vessel, which may be mended, but will never be again as if it had not been broken. Again, one fall leads to others. It is like going upon very slippery ice on the face of a hill: even in the attempt to rise we are carried away again farther than ever. Moreover, we give others a hold over us. If we have not sinned alone, to have sinned once involves a tacit pledge that we will sin again, and it is often almost impossible to get out of such a false position. God keep us from believing the devil's lie, that to fall once does not matter. JAMES STALKER.

June 17.

CONSCIOUS OF IMMORTALITY.

IF a man is able to conceive of immortality; if he can picture to himself a being who can live for ever; if he recognizes in himself any powers which can outlast and laugh at death—then any limit of life must seem narrow; against the broad background of the whole any part must seem

small. On the blue sky the almost million miles of the sun's breadth seem narrow. It is here that the truth about the matter lies. It is only by the dim sense of his immortality, only by the divine sight of himself as a being capable of long, long life, that man thinks his life on earth is short. Only by losing that divine sight of himself, and looking at himself as the beasts look at themselves, can he come to think his life long. The beast's life never seems short to him. Think of yourself as a beast, and your life will never seem short to you. It is the divine consciousness in man—the consciousness that he is a child of God—that makes him know he is short-lived. Feel this, and is not the shortness of life the crown and glory of the race?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 18.

HELP FROM ABOVE.

THE fear of pain, the fear of disgrace, the fear of discomfort, and the shame that comes with the loftiest companionship—we may have to appeal to them all for support in the hours which come so often in our lives when we are very weak. But, after all, the appeal to these helpers is not the final cry of the soul. They are like the bits of wood that the drowning sailor clutches when he must have something at the instant, or he perishes. They are not the solid shore on which at last he

drops his tired feet and knows that he is safe. Or rather, perhaps, the man who trusts them is like a dweller in some valley down which a freshet pours, who drives the stakes of his imperilled tent deeper into the ground ; not like one who leaves the valley altogether and escapes to the mountain where the freshet never comes.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 19.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

A MAN is called into existence to enjoy fellowship and union with God—to know God until he becomes in some sense the representative of God. Should there, then, not always be present to man's mind this one thought : "I am created for God ; I am to represent God to the things below me ; I am to walk in oneness with God ; the ambition of my soul is so to be the very reflector of God that I become one with Him, and yet remain a creature to the end of eternity" ? If that be the standard, it is evident that something must be done to meet man's present circumstances and to bring them into accord with what God requires, which is nothing less than perfection. Our holiness is the extent to which we carry out that perfection.

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

June 20.

THE SECRET OF LIVING.

“KEEP thy heart with all diligence.” Heart-keeping is very much like house-keeping. There must be a continual sweeping out of dirt and clearing out of rubbish—a daily washing of dishes and a perpetual battle with all sorts of vermin. If heart-cleaning could be done up once for all, then the Christian might discharge all his graces, and have an easy time of it. And just because the assaults of subtle temptations are so constant, and the uprisings of sinful passions are so frequent, and the task of keeping the inward man what it ought to be is so difficult, many a one who begins a religious life gets discouraged, and makes a wretched failure.....Only Christ will give me the victory.

CUYLER.

June 21.

THE SEQUEL OF DUTY.

HAPPINESS is the natural flower of duty. The good man ought to be a thoroughly bright and happy man.

Many and many an experience there is in the world which gives us the right to believe that happiness is something very coy and wilful, which, when we chase it, runs away from us, but, when

we turn away from it and seek for something better, changes its mind, and chases us.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 22.

"BE YE HOLY."

BEFORE you burns the beauty of holiness. Perfectly independent of our temporal conditions, shining alike in rich and poor, not garnered by trouble, not outshone by joy, visible to God even when no man sees it, and at last made clearer and not dimmer by the river that we all must cross—that is possible for every one of you.

True spotlessness from the world must not come negatively, by the garments being drawn back from every worldly contact, but positively, by the garments being so essentially, divinely pure that they fling pollution off as sunshine, hurrying on its mission to the world, flings back the darkness that tries to stop its way.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 23.

A CONSECRATED LIFE.

IF you think about the details of your work as if there were nothing beyond them, you grow special, narrow, petty. If you can do it for God, in perfect, childlike, loving desire for His glory, then your work, be it as heavy in its nature as it

may, leaps itself from the low ground and carries you every day into the presence of the God for whom you do it. That is the continual beauty of a consecrated life—possible under all sorts of circumstances, possible to every kind of man in every kind of task.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 24.

THE CITY OF GOD.

THE true life must always be going up to the city of God. It must go there for its first total consecration. It must go there for its education. It must go there for its work. It must go there to catch sight of its promised victory. And at last it must go there for its final sacrifice and pain, which bring the end and the victory. Under every circumstance of life we go up to Him, and the gates of God are always open to us.....And every mood and time of life come to their best only as they enter into Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 23.

TRUTH IS GOD'S REALITY.

SOMETIMES there comes in all of us a strong, deep craving to give up this endless, complicated search after what is safe or proper or fashionable to believe, and just to seek what is true; and

to get rid of these thousand artificial standards of what a man is expected to do, and, come of it what will, simply to do what is right.

If Christ sees reality, we can well understand how He can be patient with littleness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 26.

DISCIPLINE A BLESSING.

SOME prayers Christ does not answer, we may say, because they ask Him to do our work for us.....Tell me, is there a kinder thing that you can do for your pupil who comes up to you with his slate, asking you to work out for him his problem, than to bid him go back to his seat and do his task himself, and get that discipline and learning which is really the object of his having his task set to him at all? You ask Christ to show you with a flash of lightning what your sorrow means. You ask Him to reveal to you by some supernatural illumination which path of life you ought to take, which friendship you shall cultivate, what profession you can most successfully pursue. There comes no answer to those prayers. And why? Those are your problems. It is by hard work of yours, by watchful vigilance, by careful weighing of consideration against consideration, that you must settle those things for yourself.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 27

MIRRORING THE DIVINE LIFE.

A SINGLE dew-drop, as it quivers on a leaf on a June morning, mirrors and reflects the whole blue sky ; yet what a miniature picture it gives of that vast expanse of heaven ! So human fatherhood is a dew-drop which mirrors the divine fatherhood ; but it is only a picture compressed into minutest size, and with only dim, broken reflection of a glorious love which is infinite in its length and breadth and height and depth.

J. R. MILLER.

June 28.

NOUGHT LIVES FOR SELF.

HERE is the power of true self-sacrifice ; here is the secret which takes out of it all the bitterness and brutality. Always it is the giving up of a symbol that you may have the reality. In the great sacrifice of all Christ lays down His life, but it is that He may take it again. Do you think that Christ did not care for life and all that makes life beautiful to us ? Surely He did ; but He cared more for that which they represent—the living purely, the doing of His Father's will, and the serving of His brethren. That was why He was able to do without the things which seem to be absolutely essential to our lives ; because He

was so much more full than we are of the beauty and glory of the life with God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

June 29.

TRUST IN THE DARK.

IF we can put our trust in God when we are in total darkness, when may we not trust Him? Sometimes we are called upon to trust in God when He seems to go right back against all His promises. That is trusting Him in the darkness. Weak faith will judge God's promises by one's feelings, by one's evidences, when we ought to judge the feelings and the evidences by the promises. As long as I have the promises, God give me grace to trust in Him, whatever befall, and bid my soul keep still, knowing that He will never fail.

MARCUS RAINSFORD.

June 30.

FILLING YOUR PLACE.

REAL worth always finds its true place at length. There are some people who think they never get into the place they are fitted to fill; but usually something in the men themselves is the secret of their failure. It is not some happy chance that lifts men to places of honour and responsibility, nor is it piety alone. Brains are

necessary for great duties as well as honesty and prayerfulness. God does not put a man into a high position merely because he is a good man. The man must have abilities; and if he has, and is a true man, the world will want him some time. Let young men make themselves ready for positions of trust, and they will be called to the positions at the right time. God's clock is never too slow.

J. R. MILLER.

July 1.

OPPORTUNITIES.

THE words, "redeeming the time," are not fairly translated. They mean "buying up the opportunity." Be on the lookout for opportunities. The saddest part of our record, I fear, is that we have let precious opportunities flow by us, never to be recalled. Think of the opportunities you have had to say a word to an impenitent soul, or some word of comfort to a friend, or to testify for Christ. The spectre I most fear is the ghost of lost opportunities. Be on the lookout for opportunities, and you will never know just what blessing is going to burst on you.

CUYLER.

July 2.

"MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT."

REMEMBER it is not just compensation, but transformation, that you are to seek. Not heaven yet. That looms before us always, tempting us on; but now the earth, with all its duties, sorrows, difficulties, doubts, and dangers. We want a faith, a truth, a grace to help us *now*, right here, where we are stumbling about, dizzied and fainting with our thirst. And we can have it. One who was man, yet mightier than man, has walked the vale before us. When He walked it He turned it all into a well of living water. To them who are willing to walk in His footsteps, to keep in His light, the well He opened shall be for ever flowing. Nay, it shall pass into them and fulfil there Christ's own words: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 3.

WEEK-DAY RELIGION.

RELIGION is living out the principles of Christianity in one's ordinary week-day life. It is getting the Bible and the prayers and the services into thought and act and character. We

must not cut our lives in two, and call one part secular, governing it by one set of principles, and then regard the other part as sacred, to be controlled by another set of rules. All life should be made religious in the sense that everything is to be done in such a way as to please God, under the direction of His counsel. We have just as much religion as we get into our week-day life, and not a whit more. Whatsoever we do, even to eating and drinking, we should do in the name of the Lord Jesus.

J. R. MILLER.

July 4.

AIMING TRUE.

THE onward reach, the struggle to an apprehended purpose, the straight, clear line right from His own self-knowledge to His work, was perfect in the Lord. "For this cause was I born," He cried. His life pierced like an arrow through the cloud of aimless lives, never for a moment losing its direction, hurrying on with a haste and assurance which were divine.....We revel in the making of specialists. Perhaps we overdo it, but no thinking man dreams of saying that the thing itself is wrong. This movement of a man's whole life along some clearly apprehended line of self-development and self-accomplishment, this reaching of a life out forward to its own best attainment, no man can live as a man ought to live without

it. The men who have no purpose are good for nothing. They lie in the world like mere pulpy masses, giving it no strength or interest or character.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 5.

THE DIVINE PLAN.

THE one lesson that God has taught me, if He ever has taught me anything in connection with the grace of God, is that there is such a thing as a divine plan in a man's life, and that the only wisdom in this world is to find out what that plan is, and to be led into it step by step, and not to mind what is the end of it. There is much said about the divine call, little said about the end of it. Why? Because no tongue—not even the divine tongue—will attempt to tell what is the outcome of a life that is led of God. Even the Bible, with all its majesty and divinity, does not undertake to tell how great that life is which takes its way into the life of God; it only gives a clue by which we can find the way step by step.

H. C. MABIE.

July 6.

BEYOND DEATH—LIFE.

DEATH did not close Christ's being; it was only an experience which that being underwent. That spiritual existence which had been

going on for ever, on which the short existences of men had been strung into consistency, now came and submitted itself to that which men had always been submitting to. And lo! instead of being what men had feared it was—what men had hardly dared to hope that it was not—the putting out of life, it was seen to be only the changing of the circumstances of life without any real power over the real principle of life, any more power than the cloud has over the sun that it obscures.....That was the wonder of Christ's death.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 7.

"I WILL BE WITH THEE."

EVEN in busy life God's people have often to pass "through the waters" of care, trial, danger, grief; but the Lord promises to be with them. Let us believe that promise. Still more solemn is the passage through the valley of the shadow of death. But the dying believer is not left alone. "I will be with thee." Fellow-Christian, keep this in mind. When languor and disease weaken the body, the mind is often enfeebled too. Allow for this, and do not reproach yourself because of nervous apprehension. "He knoweth our frame," and He will keep His promise.

JOHN HALL.

July 8.

"THY WORD GOETH FORTH."

THERE are some men whose minds are wholly sceptical of Christian truth, who yet allow themselves a sort of religion on the weaker side. They let their emotions be religious, while they keep their minds in the hard, clear air of disbelief; the heart may worship, while the brain denies. I will not stop to ask the meaning of this last strange condition, interesting as the study might be made. I only want you all to feel how thoroughly Christianity is bound to reject indignantly this whole treatment of itself. Just think how the great masters of religion would receive it! Think of David and his cry: "Thy testimonies are wonderful. I have more understanding than my teachers, for thy testimonies are my study."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 9.

"THERE IS NO DEATH."

TO him (who believes in immortality) death is a jar, a break, a deep, mysterious change, but not the end of life.....See how free it makes him—how it breaks his tyrannies! He can undertake works of self-culture, or the development of truth, far, far too vast for the earthly life of any Methuselah to finish, and yet smile calmly

and work on when men tell him that he will die before his work is done. Die! Shall not the sculptor sleep a hundred times before the statue he begins to-day is finished, and wake a hundred times more ready for his work, bringing with a hundred new mornings to his work the strength and the visions that have come to him in his slumber?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 10.

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS.

SO long as there is a radical difference between truth and falsehood, and so long as truth sustains relations to life, it will make a difference whether men believe true or false doctrine. Doctrines are the roots of life. Great lives do not grow out of false beliefs. Doctrine is immensely important, but not all-important. The root does not exist for itself; it is a means to the tree and the fruit as an end. A Christian truth in the heart brings forth Christian acts in the life as naturally as the root pushes its stalk up into the air and the sun. Cut the stalk, fell the tree, and the root dies at length. A faith without works is soon dead. If our doctrines do not flower and fruit in Christian living, they die. Many a man's creed is a field full of stumps. There was life there once, but because the natural expression of

that life was prevented, it perished. We have not overestimated the importance of *believing* the truth, but we have underestimated the importance of *living* the truth.

JOSIAH STRONG.

July 11.

GOD HIDING HIMSELF.

WITH all deep things the deeper light brings new mysteriousness. The mystery of light is the privilege and prerogative of the profoundest things. The shallow things are capable only of the mystery of darkness. Of that all things are capable. Nothing is so thin, so light, so small, that if you cover it with clouds and hide it in half-lights it will not seem mysterious. But the most genuine and profound things you may bring forth into the fullest light, and let the sunshine bathe them through and through, and in them there will open ever new wonders of mysteriousness. The mystery of light belongs to them. And how, then, must it be with God, the Being of all beings, the Being who is Himself essential Being, out of whom all other beings spring and from whom they are continually fed? Surely in Him the law which we have been tracing must find its consummation. Surely of Him it must be supremely true that the more we know of Him—the more He shows Himself to us—the more

mysterious He must for ever be. The mystery of light must be complete in Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 12.

ALL MAY BE SAVED.

ONE great difference between the Christian and the non-Christian worker is this: non-Christian workers say that there is a certain proportion of men who cannot be reached any way. As a modern English author has said, "There is no substitute for a good heart, and no remedy for a bad one." O frightful gospel that some of the philanthropists of our day are preaching! Is that all the message they have to the world—no remedy for a bad heart? What means the parable of the lost coin, if, though lost, there was no gleam of its original lustre? What means the parable of the lost sheep, if there was not some dumb, inarticulate longing for the shelter of the fold? And what means the parable of the lost son, if there was not in those distant fields a cry of longing for the father's home and heart? W. H. P. FAUNCE.

July 13.

HEARKEN AND DO.

EVERY true prayer has its background and its foreground. The foreground of prayer is the intense, immediate desire for a certain

blessing which seems to be absolutely necessary for the soul to have; the background of prayer is the quiet, earnest desire that the will of God, whatever it may be, should be done. What a picture is the perfect prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane! In front burns the strong desire to escape death and to live; but behind there stands, calm and strong, the craving of the whole life for the doing of the will of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 14.

GOD'S WAYS—OURS.

INDIVIDUAL happiness is often destroyed by discontentment with our plan and duties. We think ourselves fit for something higher. We lose the zeal and earnestness that we ought to put in every appointed service. How much better to let God lead us about and instruct us! And on this way of trusting God we get a strength not otherwise attainable. "I am in this high and difficult place, but I did not seek it. God put me into it. I can look to Him for the ability to fill it to His glory."

JOHN HALL.

July 15.

EYES TO SEE.

I LOOK at Jesus on the cross. I see Him there convicting sin by the sight of its terrific consequence. I see Him also drawing men's souls

up, away from the earth and from themselves, up to God, by that amazing sign of how God loved them. And when I turn from looking at the Sufferer, and look into the faces of those men and women to whom His suffering has brought its power, I see how, in the struggle against sin under the power of the love of God, to which the cross has summoned them, they are knowing God; how, in St. Paul's great words, "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, is giving unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 16.

WHAT IS CONSECRATION?

CONSECRATION is only possible when we give up our will *about everything*. As soon as we come to the point of giving ourselves to God, we are almost certain to become aware of the presence of one thing, if not of more, out of harmony with His will. Every room and cupboard in the house, with the exception of one, is thrown open to the new Occupant; every limb in the body but one is submitted to the practised hand of the good Physician. But that small reserve spoils the whole. To give ninety-nine parts and to withhold the hundredth undoes the whole trans-

action. Jesus will have all or none. Who would live in a fever-stricken house so long as one room was not exposed to disinfectants, air, and sun? Who would undertake a case so long as the patient refused to submit one part of his body to examination? Who would become responsible for a bankrupt so long as one ledger was kept back? The reason that so many fail to attain the blessed life is that there is some one point in which they hold back from God, and concerning which they prefer to have their own way and will rather than His. This one little thing mars the whole, robs them of peace, and compels them to wander in the desert.

F. B. MEYER.

July 17.

GLORIFYING GOD.

THE Holy Ghost is a divine Person. He can, therefore, be present everywhere. He can take our human nature, consecrate it to God, body and spirit. So even the body is honoured as a temple of the Holy Ghost. Is such a temple to be desecrated by impurity, by drunkenness, and the like? Even the decorations given to the body, and the uses made of it—as in the games of heathen Greece and Rome—should be looked at and judged of in this light by all who count themselves Christians. Pray for grace to glorify God in your body and spirit.

JOHN HALL.

July 18.

GUIDING INTO ALL TRUTH.

IF Christ be really the Son of God, bringing in an utterly new way the power of God to bear on human life—if He be the natural creator-king of humanity, come for the salvation of humanity—then it would seem to follow that the work of salvation must be His, and His alone; and if we see the process of salvation, the struggle of the good against the evil, going on all over the world, we shall be ready still to feel that it is all under His auspices and guidance.....

Once accept what is the central truth of operative Christianity—the power of an ever-present unseen Spirit, always manifesting Christ and making Him influential—and then it is not hard to see that, men being the same, open to the same influence everywhere, they may be and they are turned to the one same goodness by the power of the one same Spirit of Christ.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 19.

"A BUILDING OF GOD."

DEATH is mysterious and awful to man naturally. Hence it is feared, under the influence of natural religion, all the world over, save where even natural religion is put aside by some

attractive error. The religion of our Bibles recognizes its solemnity, but removes the terror, and shows how "mortality is swallowed up of life." The disciple of Christ passes from death unto life. It is not merely that there is a Father's house above, but the spirit enters into it in a state of perfection never reached on earth. The soul, absent from the body, is at home with the Lord.

JOHN HALL.

July 20.

NO ONE DENIED.

REMEMBER, the Holy Spirit is God, and God is love. And no man ever asks God to come into his heart, and holds his heart open to God, without God's entering. Children, pray the dear God, the blessed Holy Spirit, to come and live in your heart and show you Jesus, and make you love to do what is right for His sake. Old men, aspire to taste already here what is to be the life and joy of your eternity. Men and women in the thick of life, do not go helpless when there is such help at hand; do not go on by yourselves struggling for truth and toiling at your work, when the Holy Spirit is waiting to show you Christ, and to give you in Him the profoundness of faith and the delightfulness of duty.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 21.

GROWING A CHARACTER.

HUMAN life is character-building; for remember that character means exactly what we are, while reputation is only what other people think we are. Every man builds his own character. Fix one fact in your mind, however, and that is, the better and stronger Christian you are, the more dearly you must pay for it. All the best things are costly. Jesus Christ laid down His life to redeem you from sin and death. "Free grace" for you meant Calvary for Christ. A strong, godly character is not to be had gratis.

CUYLER.

July 22.

STEPPING-STONES.

THERE are three grades of Christian life. There is, first of all, the dissatisfied life—the life that knows there is something which it does not possess; the life that is perpetually discontented, and rightly so, with itself. There is, second, the life that is half and half, that now and then rises up to the Mount of Transfiguration, and then paces for long seasons over weary wastes of whitened ashes. There is a third life of satisfaction and contentment, of peace and power and rest; the life that has made Jesus Christ its one

object; the life that every man lives who is able to say, in the fine phrase of Ignatius, "O Christ, thou art 'my inseparable life.'" The soul that has made Christ its one object has entered into rest, and has entered into power; it has entered into a life of activity which no foe can withstand, and of contentment which no storm can ruffle; for over all the seas where it voyages speaks that Voice which quieted the turbulent waves of the Tiberian sea: "Peace, be still." Nothing can overcome or disturb the soul that is hid with Christ in God and has made Christ the one object of its life.

ROBERT E. SPEER.

July 23.

THROUGH CHRIST ONLY.

WERE we to claim the place of sons of God on the ground of our goodness, we should be self-deceived. Were we to claim the place on the ground of the "Fatherhood of God," as the phrase is vaguely used to describe the origin of the race and "the brotherhood of man," we should also deceive ourselves. It is not as Creator, but as the God of grace, and through Jesus Christ, that God puts us in this high place. Let us pray for and let us prize the Spirit of adoption, and let us seek the restoration through grace of the Father's image, lost by our sin.

JOHN HALL.

July 24.

IN HEAVENLY PLACES.

JESUS spends the night in prayer and meditation. Out of this solitude, out of this mysterious communion with His Father, in which He has, as it were, refilled Himself with the assurance that the human is son to the divine, He comes when morning breaks, and gathering His disciples around Him, He speaks to them, and the multitude who have thronged about Him, the sermon on the mount.....

Neander calls the sermon on the mount "the Magna Charta of the kingdom of God." It is a fine phrase, and in one sense it is completely true. But really the idea of God which fills the great discourse is not the idea of king, but the idea of father.....What gives it its great, everlasting value is the passing over of kingship into fatherhood; or, if you please to put it so, the opening and deepening of kingship till it reveals the fatherhood which lies folded at the heart of it.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 23.

MAMMON OR GOD?

THE perils of wealth are emphatically presented by our Saviour. Even uninspired men can tell how "wealth accumulates and men decay."

The world flatters the wealthy, tempts them with fascinating pleasures which take time, money, and thought, and carry the affections away from things above. Faithful teachers warn against these things, and the worldlings turn away from their teaching, while the prince of this world compliments them as being above the narrow ways and old-fashioned ideas of former times. Have I in me the love of the world or the love of the Father?

JOHN HALL.

July 26.

THE PERFECT MIND.

FOR man to accept the pattern of his living absolutely from any other being besides God in all the universe would be for him to sacrifice his self and to lose his originality. But for man to find and simply reproduce the picture of his life which is in God is for him not to sacrifice but to find his self. For the man is in God. The ideal—the possible perfection of everything that he can do or be—is there in God; and to be original for any man is not to start aside with headlong recklessness and do what neither brother-man nor God dreamed of our doing; but it is to do with filial loyalty the act which, because God is God, a being such as we are ought to do under the circumstances, in the conditions in which we stand.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 27.

EMPTIED OF SELF.

WHILE it is the Divine Spirit that makes the ground of the human heart good, the truth that is set forth in the parable of the sower bears on human responsibility. We must try to have our hearts like good ground for "the seed," to hear and understand the word. Let us hear it regularly, not "now and then;" let us pray beforehand for the grace of the Holy Spirit; let us guard against preoccupying the heart with the things of the world—as in a Sunday newspaper; and let us be ready to do as the word directs, like the jailer when he asked, "What must I do to be saved?" or like Saul when he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

JOHN HALL.

July 28.

TO DO THY WILL.

WHAT do you know about the uses of the Lord—of this great work which the Lord has to do? What do you know of it that gives you the right to say that your power is little? God may have some most critical use to put you to as soon as you declare yourself His servant. Men judge by the size of things; God judges by their fitness. Fitness is more than size. You can see something of your size, but you can see almost nothing of your fitness until you understand all

the wonderful manifold work that God has to do. It is a most wanton presumption and pride for any man to dare to be sure that there is not some very important and critical place which just he and no one else is made to fill. It is almost as presumptuous to think you can do nothing as to think you can do everything. The latter folly supposes that God exhausted Himself when He made you ; but the former supposes that God made a hopeless blunder when He made you, which it is quite as impious for you to think.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 29.

IN HIS GOOD TIME.

MEN complain that God does not do this and that and the other thing for them, which He never undertook to do. They say, "He does not make me rich. He does not fill my life with friendships." So they flutter about with their complainings as a bird will sweep this way and that, doubtful and wandering and tempted on every side. But as at last the bird catches sight of the home where it belongs, though very far away, and all its flutterings cease, and setting itself straight towards that, it steadies itself and seeks it without a single turn aside ; so by-and-by one of these wanderers among many hopes discovers far away the hope—the one only hope—for

which God made him, and forgetting everything else, thenceforth gives himself to that, to serve God, and by serving Him to grow into His goodness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 30.

THE INNER LIFE.

THE world about it is strong with the promise and temptation of holy things. The soul itself is weak with its own unholiness. Then comes the better, perfect, completing promise of a change of soul. The Christ who has done all this offers to do one thing more—to make the dead soul alive and able to enjoy and use it all. He will come into us—not merely stand without us. He will come in and be Himself the power which lays hold of His own invitations. We may feed on Him. Nay, let us take His own strong word and say, “He that eateth me, the same shall live by me.” That is the inner life—Christ in the soul rising up and laying hold of the infinite possibilities which redemption has prepared.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

July 31

THE GREATEST IS—CHARITY.

THAT man ought to distrust his Christianity very deeply who finds that when he has become a Christian he takes no more large and

hopeful and charitable view of his fellow-men and their lives than he did before. The glory of a revealed immortality is that it exalts into struggle for a purpose that which seemed to be only the restless tossing and heaving of mere discontent poor fitful efforts after goodness, broken and distracted—a mere unrest and moral turmoil everywhere. What can interpret it except the great opening of an eternity, and the sight of the power of that eternity working even here? With that in view, we come to a large and tolerant suspense of judgment that is good for us. Who can say how much of this which seems purposeless restlessness is really purposeful struggle? The wild, confused waves are going somewhere. We grow to a sure conviction that very much of what seems bad is only good unformed and struggling under the power of the resurrection to its full development and exhibition.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 1.

HE LEADETH THEE.

PAUL had a “thorn in the flesh.” We remember how God dealt with it. Grace was made sufficient for him, and divine strength was perfected in his weakness. There are times when we choose our way without regard to God. No wonder it should sometimes prove a rough way. We

are in a fallen world. Let us go to Him, own the fault, and beg deliverance. Sometimes the troubles come where He has led us. Let us not murmur, but look for light from Him, and the sanctifying grace that can bring good out of them.

JOHN HALL.

Aug. 2.

TO FIND CHRIST.

IS not Christ the mountain up into which the believer goes, and in which he finds the divine idea of himself? As a mountain seems to be the meeting-place of earth and heaven, the place where the bending skies meet the aspiring planet, the place where the sunshine and the cloud keep closest company with the granite and the grass,—so Christ is the meeting-place of divinity and humanity; He is at once the condescension of divinity and the exaltation of humanity; and man wanting to know God's idea of man—any man wanting to know God's idea of him—must go up into Christ, and he will find it there.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 3.

A JOYOUS OFFERING.

NOT in a gloomy silence, as if the people were doing a hard duty which they would not do if they could help it, did the smoke of their offering ascend to God; but with a burst of jubilant music

and with a song of triumphant joy, which rang down through the crowded courts, the host of the Jews claimed for themselves anew their place in the obedience of God. The act of sacrifice was done amid a chorus of delight.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 4.

RESPONSIVE LOVE.

THE true sign of forgiveness is not some mysterious signal waved from the sky ; not some obscure emotion hunted out in your heart ; not some stray text culled out of your Bible ; certainly not some word of mortal priest telling you that your satisfaction is complete. The soul full of responsive love to Christ, and ready, longing, hungry to serve Him, is its own sign of forgiveness.....

I think that with all we know of the divine heart of Jesus, He would far rather see a soul trust Him too much, if that is possible, than trust Him too little, which we know is possible enough. When a man who has sinned, and who, like Simon Peter, has not a shadow or a ghost of an excuse to offer for his sin, has so known Christ that he never thinks of Him as one to be propitiated, never doubts for an instant that if he is forgivable he is forgiven, and so lets his hatred of his old sin break out in an utterance of his love for the Holy One,

and lets his sorrow for his treason only show itself in his desire for loyal work, then that poor sinner's sin is dead and gone.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 5.

THE NOBILITY OF WORK.

IT is the mere smatterer in any profession who thinks it is slight and is contemptuous about it. It is a universal rule that he is a poor workman who does not honour and respect his work. A man has no right to be doing any work which, as he grows greater within it, does not offer him new views of itself to call out an ever-increasing reverence and honour. And in all the good occupations of life (one would like to impress it upon every young merchant, young mechanic, and young student whom he can speak to) a man's best proof of growing greatness in himself is a growing perception of the greatness and beauty of his work.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 6.

ARE YOU READY?

THERE is some duty which God has made ready for you to do to-morrow—nay, to-day! He has built it like a house for you to occupy. You have not to build it. He has built it, and He will lead you up to its door and set you with

your feet upon its threshold. Will you go in and occupy it? Will you do the duty which He has made ready? Perhaps it is the great comprehensive duty of the consecration of yourself to Him; perhaps it is some special task. Whatever it is, may He who anticipated your love by His own in giving you the task now help you to fulfil His love with yours by doing it. Amen.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 7.

THE SOUL'S FEALTY TO GOD.

JESUS was a patriot. That sentiment which makes so much of the poetry of the earth—the love of men for their native land—was very strong in His bosom.....But why is it that His patriotism is a part of His life to which we least often turn? It is not only that He lived a larger life and did a larger work, which has far out-reached the Jewish people and touched us with its influence; it is the constant predominance of the sonship to God over the sonship to David in His consciousness, making Him always eager for the land of David because of the interests of God which it enshrined. This is a distinct and definite quality when it appears in a man's patriotism. It makes his patriotism fine and lofty above the measure of the common patriotic feeling of mankind.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 8.

SOWING AND REAPING.

MEN when thoughtless are easily deceived. A thing is done, and they count it "done with." This is to mock God, who is Ruler and Judge, and who calls every human being to account. We are sowing in all that we say and do, and the harvest will be as the seed. If we are guided only by fallen human nature, we can only reap corruption. If we are guided by the Spirit, we trust, love, and imitate the Saviour, and through Him we shall reap life everlasting. What is influencing us in the details of life—"the flesh" or the Spirit?

JOHN HALL.

Aug. 9.

OUT OF SELF.

PUT your hand in Christ's, that as He leads you, other men, who have turned away from Him, may look and see you walking with Him, learn to love Him through your love. I do not believe any man ever yet genuinely, humbly, thoroughly gave himself to Christ without some other finding Christ through him. I wish it might tempt some of your souls to the higher life. I hope it may. At least I am sure that it may add a new sweetness and nobleness to the consecration which some young heart is making of itself to-day, if it can hear, down the new path on which it is enter-

ing, not merely the great triumphant chant of personal salvation, "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins be glory and dominion," but also the calmer, deeper thanksgiving for usefulness, "Blessed be the God of comfort, who comforteth us that we may be able to comfort them that are in tribulation." PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 10.

OBEDIENCE MAKES DUTY EASY.

LOVING obedience, loving obedience, is the only atmosphere in which the vision of the general purpose and the faithfulness in special work grow in their true proportion and relation to each other. The distant hills with the glory on their summits, and the close meadow where the grass waits for the scythe—they meet completely in the broad kingdom of a loved and obeyed Lord. And who is Lord but Christ? And where but in the soul of him who finds in Christ the worthy revealer of the life's purpose and the sufficient master of every deed shall the great ideals of life and the petty details of life come harmoniously together? Obey Him, love Him, and nothing is too great, nothing is too little; for love knows no struggle of great or little. No impulse is too splendid for the simplest task; no task is too simple for the most splendid impulse. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 11.

HAPPINESS FOLLOWS DUTY.

WHILE the union of duty and joy is natural, it is not essential and unbreakable. The plant ought to come to flower, but if the plant fails of its flower it is still a plant. The duty should open into joy, but it may fail of joy and still be duty. If the joy is not there, still hold the duty, and be sure that you have the real thing while you are holding that. Be all the more dutiful, though it be in the dark. Do righteousness and forget happiness, and so it is most likely that happiness will come.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 12.

GOD IN NATURE.

IT means something that, in the disorder of thought and feeling, so many men are fleeing to the study of orderly nature. And it is rest and comfort. Whatever men are feeling, the seasons come and go. Whatever men are doubting, the rock is firm under their feet, and the steadfast stars pass in their certain courses overhead. Men who dare count on nothing else may still count on the tree blossoming and the grape colouring. It is good for a man perplexed and lost among many thoughts to come into closer intercourse with Nature, and to learn her ways

and to catch her spirit. It is no fancy to believe that if the children of this generation are taught a great deal more than we used to be taught of nature, and the ways of God in nature, they will be provided with the material for far healthier, happier, and less perplexed and anxious lives than most of us are living. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 13.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

HUMAN nature is selfish. The new nature is to be affectionate. Much of the decalogue is introduced with "Thou shalt not." A "new commandment" is positive, and it may well secure our obedience, coming, as it does, from the lips of Jesus, who is Love incarnate. "Love one another," notwithstanding faults and weaknesses. How unlovely we were; yet Christ loved us! Let us show that we have learned and are learning of Him, by the love we display to one another. JOHN HALL.

Aug. 14.

LET CHRIST REIGN.

TEAR your sins away. Starve your tumultuous passions. Resist temptations. Ay, if you will, punish yourself with stripes for your iniquities. Cry out to yourself and to your brethren, with every voice that you can raise.

“Cease to do evil ;” but all the time, down below, as the deepest cry of your life, let there be this other, “Learn to do well.” If you can indeed grow vigorously brave and true and pure, then cowardice and falsehood and licentiousness must perish in you. O wondrous silent slaughter of our enemies ! O wondrous casting out of fear as love grows perfect ! O death to sin, which comes by the new birth to righteousness ! O destruction, which is but the utterance of fulfilment on the other side ! O everlasting assurance, that evil has of right no place in the world ; and that if good would only lift itself up to its completeness, it might claim the whole world and all of manhood for itself !

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 13.

MY EXAMPLE.

“OBEYING Christ,” we say. And what is Christ ? I think over all that I know of Him, and this is what He is. First, He is the utterance of the eternal righteousness, the setting forth before men of that supreme nature in which there is the source and pattern of all goodness—God ; second, He is a man of clear, sharp, definite character, who lived a life in Palestine which still shines with a distinctness that no other human life can rival ; third, by His Spirit He is a per-

petual presence, a constant standard and inspiration in the heart of every man who loves and trusts Him. All those things come up to me when I say "Christ." And now can such a Christ speak to me?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 16.

REJOICE EVERMORE.

IT is the law of God that wherever there is duty there is also possible joy. Just as the man who sees foliage knows that somewhere there must be water, although his eyes or ears cannot discern it, and the trees seem to grow out of the sand; so the man who is sure that in any spot there is duty for him to do knows that there is a happiness for him somewhere in the doing of that duty, even though for the present it seems to be a dreadful drudgery. In the expectation of that joy he works. The expectation of joy is joy; and so the man who in his voluntariness surrenders some delight or privilege, finds that there is a subtler mastery of happiness which is to be gained only by giving it up and seeking something higher, though for the time it seems to separate us from the happiness we love.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 17.

"BE STILL AND WAIT."

WE have all taken a sorrow or a perplexity out into the noontide or the midnight and felt its morbid bitterness drawn out of it, and a great peace descend and fill it from the depth of the majesty under whose arch we stood.....The sweet and solemn influence which comes to you out of the noontide or the midnight sky does not take away your pain, but it takes out of it its bitterness. It lifts it to a higher peace. It says, "Be still and wait." It gives the reason power and leave and time to work. It gathers the partial into the embrace of the universal.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 18.

OVERCOMING THE WORLD.

WORLDLINESS is the reproach on many a professing Christian, and the temptation to it is strong and constant. The faithful child of God is strengthened against these temptations by the memory of what God has done for him, and by the hope of what awaits him. The Christian who for the time yields to the temptation is sure to suffer chastisement at God's loving hand. Peace is lost. The joy of salvation is taken away. Sometimes keen griefs come through children led by the

world downward to shame and ruin. "Love not the world."

JOHN HALL.

Aug. 19.

LORD, IS IT I?

NO sin is sudden. The warning may be only half recognized, but when the sin of our life comes, who of us has not felt, strangely mingled with its strangeness, a certain dreadful familiarity, such as one might feel when a man whom he had never seen, but of whom he dreamed last night, and whose face he remembered from the dream, stepped in the living flesh across his threshold? The man in business, spurning the very thought of cheating, as ready as he ever was to strike down any man who dared approach him with temptation, finds himself some day questioning duty and trying to make it say that it is not duty, or seeing how close he can run under the lee of a doubtful transaction and yet sail out safe. He has not sinned, but if he is a sensitive and thoughtful man, he sees, as he opens his eyes to what he is doing, how he *might* sin. He shudders as a man might who, walking in his sleep, woke up and found that what he thought was music is the roaring in his ears of the chasm on whose brink he stands. His coming sin has given him its warning.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 20.

THE MYSTERY OF LIGHT.

WITH the mystery of darkness we are familiar. Of the mystery of light we have not thought, perhaps, so much.....Supposing that something really rich and profound were brought out of the darkness into a sudden flood of sunlight, would it grow less or more mysterious? Suppose it is a jewel, and instead of having to strain your eyes to make out the outline of its shape, you can look now deep into its heart; see depth opening beyond depth, until it looks as if there were no end to the chambers of splendour that are shut up in that little stone; see flake after flake of luminous colour floating up out of the unseen fountain which lies somewhere in the jewel's heart;—is the jewel less or more mysterious than it was when your sight had to struggle to see whether it was a topaz or an emerald? Suppose it is a landscape. One hour all its features are vague and dim in twilight—hill, field, and stream in almost indistinguishable confusion. Six hours later the whole is glowing in the noonday sun, the streams burning with silvery light, the colours of the fresh spring hillsides striking far away upon the senses, filling them with delight and wonder. Everything is thrilling and bursting with manifest life. Has not the mystery increased with the ascending sun?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 21.

ONE WITH GOD.

HAVE you been in the habit of thinking of Christ as of one so far away, so different from us, that what He is and does seems to throw no light on what we may be and do? But such a thought as that denies the very power of the Incarnation. Here stand our human lives, all dark and lustreless. Here stands one human life in which has been lighted the fire of an evident divinity. Shall we look on and see the fine lines and the fair colours of human nature brought out by the fire which burns within, and not make any glowing inference with regard to our own humanity, with regard to its unfulfilled possibilities and the attainments for which it may confidently hope? Surely not so!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 22.

SOUL AND BODY—YOURS.

THERE is no true care for the body which forgets the soul. There is no true care for the soul which is not mindful of the body. The pressure of psychology on physiology, the wise and learned, also the unwise and ignorant methods of reaching physical conditions through the change of mental states which are so prominent in the medical practice of to-day, bear witness to the first

fact. All the kind of teaching which a few years ago went by the name of muscular Christianity gives testimony to the second.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 23.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

IT is a significant thing that the Divine Spirit directing the apostle should so often indicate peace as a needed and a precious blessing. Conscience troubles us. Our fellow-men often distress us. Cares press upon us. Duties, many and difficult, demand our thought, test our memory, and exhaust our strength. Peace is sometimes sought by men in the way of pleasure. But the true peace comes from God, through Him who redeems us from this present evil world. Believer, hear Him saying, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth;" no, not as a formal salute, but a real and positive blessing.

JOHN HALL.

Aug. 24.

SIN TO BE DESTROYED.

I HAVE no patience with the foolish talk which would make sin nothing but imperfection, and would preach that man needs nothing but to have his deficiencies supplied, to have his native goodness educated and brought out, in order to be all

that God would have him be. The horrible incompetency of that doctrine must be manifest enough to any man who knows his own heart, or who listens to the tumult of wickedness which rises up from all the dark places of the earth. Sin is a dreadful, positive, malignant thing. What the world in its worse part needs is, not to be developed, but to be destroyed. Any other talk about it is shallow and mischievous folly. The only question is about the best method and means of destruction.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 23.

THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

WHEN we open our eyes morning after morning and find the old struggle, on which we closed our eyes last night, awaiting us.....when all our habits and thoughts have become entwined and coloured with some tyrannical necessity, which, however it may change the form of its tyranny, will never let us go,—it grows so hard as almost to appear impossible for us to anticipate that that dominion ever is to disappear, and that we shall ever shake free our wings, and leave behind the earth to which we have been chained so long.

But the day comes, nevertheless. Some morning we go out to meet the old struggle, and it is not there.....Things do get done, and when anything is really finished, then come thoughtful moments

in which we ask ourselves whether we have let that which we shall know no longer do for us all that it had in its power to do, whether we are carrying out of the finished experience that which it has all along been trying to give to our characters and souls.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 26.

A LIVING TEMPLE.

SLOWLY, through all the universe, that temple of God is being built. Wherever, in any world, a soul, by free-willed obedience, catches the fire of God's likeness, it is set into the growing walls, a living stone.....In what strange quarries and stone-yards the stones for that celestial wall are being hewn! Out of the hillsides of humiliated pride, deep in the darkness of crushed despair, in the fretting and dusty atmosphere of little cares, in the hard, cruel contacts that man has with man; wherever souls are being tried and ripened, in whatever commonplace and homely ways—there God is hewing out the pillars for His temple. Oh, if the stone can only have some vision of the temple of which it is to lie a part for ever, what patience must fill it as it feels the blows of the hammer, and knows that success for it is simply to let itself be wrought into what shape the Master wills!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 27.

INHERITING THE PROMISE.

CHILD of God, does a feeling of loneliness ever depress you? The sense of solitude is painful. Look back to Abel, Enoch, and Abraham. Look around to faithful soldiers on the field for the truth. Look into church history and see the blood of martyrs flowing. Look forward to the millennial days when Christ shall be everywhere adored. Look up to heaven, as it is in the book of the Revelation. All these are of the family of which you are one. You will be with Him in due time, yes, with them for ever.

JOHN HALL.

Aug. 28.

DANGER IN PROSPERITY.

TIMES of great spiritual abundance have their very deep and subtle dangers.....Many a Christian has failed just there. Soon the great light, unused, has faded away and left the soul in darkness. Soon peace which was not vitalized to power has decayed to pride. Something of this kind has come, I think, to whole generations, to whole periods of Christianity. But see! If you lift up your head, if you put out your hand and take your task, which certainly is waiting for you, then instantly your high emotions know their place.

They turn themselves to motives. They become the necessary habits of the life. They prove their reality by what they can make you strong to do.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 29.

"YE ARE MY WITNESSES."

WE are like windows through which a higher light is always falling; but the window is blurred and mottled, because at some place it is stained deep and will not let the light through; and where it does receive it, it is always conscious of *receiving*. The radiance with which it shines comes to it from without; not *it* shines, but the light shines through it.

We learn to count men thus, not by the witness that they bear of themselves, but by the witness that they bear of God.....Many of the most subtle and perplexing phenomena of human life become clearer to us when we have once reached this conception of the unity of the universe, of the way in which man exists and manifests himself only in relation toward God. "Christ is *all*, and *in all*;" or, in Paul's phrase, "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.....Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 30.

"GOD IS LIGHT."

TOO often have the minds both of religious and of irreligious men conceived of God as the great hinderer of human knowledge. Even those men who thought they honoured Him supremely have talked about Him as if He loved the darkness ; they have dwelt upon mystery as if it were something which God treasured, and which His children were to treasure for itself, as if they did not wish it cleared up and made light. They have imagined Him almost standing guard over whole regions of knowledge and forbidding them to the impatient intellect of man. That is not the idea of David ; that is not the idea of the Bible anywhere. Against all the folly of the church, and all the ignorance of unbelief which declares that God is darkness, stands up the protest of John, who cries, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all ;" and the glowing ascription of the light-loving David, who declares, "In thy light shall we see light."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Aug. 31.

FROM NATURE TO GOD.

THE summer is smiling around, and trees and flowers return the smile. Many have the charms of country life around them all the year.

Now the dwellers in the cities begin to seek the clear air and the beautiful surroundings of the country home. Well, here is a fresh call to remember the Creator. It is not only that astronomy displays His power and wisdom. You consider the lilies how they grow. As the charms and beauties of these "products of nature," as we sometimes say, forgetting that nature is only a name for what God has made—as these attract and delight us, let us look up and think of our Father, the maker of all.

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 1.

NONE BESIDE THEE.

NOW under all outward rebellion and wickedness there is in every man who ought to be a friend of God—and that means every man whom God has made—a need of reconciliation. To get back to God, that is the struggle. The soul is God-like, and seeks its own. It wants its Father. There is an orphanage, a home-sickness of the heart which has gone up into the ear of God, and called the Saviour, the Reconciler, to meet it by His wondrous life and death. I, for my part, love to see in every restlessness of man's moral life everywhere, whatever forms it takes, the struggles of this imprisoned desire. The reason may be rebellious, and vehemently cast aside the whole

story of the New Testament, but the soul is never wholly at its rest away from God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 2.

IF YE LOVE GOD.

AS the sun shines upon a bank of snow, no two of all the myriad particles catch his light alike or give the same interpretation of his glory. Have you ever imagined such a purpose for your commonplace existence? If you have, you must have asked yourself what the quality is in a man's life which can make it *reflective* of God—capable of bearing witness of Him. There is some quality in the polished brass or in the calm lake that makes it able to send forth again the sunlight that descends upon it. What is it in a soul that makes it able to do the same to the God who sheds Himself upon its life? The Bible has its one great name for such a great transforming quality, and that is *Love*. Love in the Bible is not so much an action of the soul as it is a quality in the soul permitting God to do His divine actions through it. The love of God is a new nature, a new fibre, a new fineness and responsiveness in the soul itself, by which God is able to express Himself upon and through it as He cannot when He finds only the medium of the coarse material of an unloving heart.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 3.

WHENCE COMETH HELP.

THE mountains to the Hebrew were always full of mystery and awe. They stood around the sunlit level of his daily life robed in deep clouds, the home of wandering winds, flowing down with waters, trembling, as it seemed, with the awful footsteps of God. They made, indeed, for him the background of all life, as they make the background of every landscape in which they stand.....The foreground of the plain-land rests upon the background of the hills. From them it gains its lights and shadows. The two depend on one another.....To most men the actual, immediate circumstances of life are so pressing that they forget the everlasting truths and forces by which those circumstances must be made dignified and strong.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 4.

"THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD."

WE have each "the heart of the sons of men," and even though, by grace, it has been made a new heart, there is, as Paul tells us, a force still within moving toward evil. So we have to guard against subtle temptations. God does not explain, day after day, His providences. Delayed punishment is no evidence that there will be no

punishment. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing" until the time comes for the display of His judgment and justice. He protects, however, them that wait on Him, and maketh all things, even the mysteries of life, to work together for their good. Reader, you may safely say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 5.

HE WILL SATISFY.

REST in expectation we may all have now if we believe in God and know we are His children. Every taste of Him that we have ever had becomes a prophecy of His perfect giving of Himself to us. It is as when a pool lies far up in the dry rocks, and hears the tide and knows that her refreshment and replenishing is coming. How patient she is! The other pools nearer the shore catch the sea first, and she hears them leaping and laughing; but she waits patiently. She knows the tide will not turn back till it has reached her. And by-and-by the blessed moment comes. The last ridge of rock is overwashed. The stream pours in—at first a trickling thread sent only at the supreme effort of the largest wave, but by-and-by the great sea in its fulness. It gives the waiting pool itself, and she is satisfied. So it will certainly be with us if we wait for the Lord,

however He delays, and refuse to let ourselves be satisfied with any supply but Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 6.

A PRAYER FOR HELP.

“O GOD, my heavenly Father,” a child of God may fittingly say, “the heaven is Thy throne, and the earth is Thy footstool. I am weak, but Thou art mighty. What Thou doest I do not now understand, but I know that Thou doest all things well. Help me to feel this in the depths of my heart, and to put even sorrows and pains among the ‘all things’ working together for my good, even my eternal good. May the divine Comforter abide with me, and sanctify me, for my precious Saviour’s sake. Amen.”

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 7.

IN THEE I ABIDE.

TO stand with the good things of life all stripped away, to stand beaten and buffeted by storms of disaster and disappointment, to stand with all our brethren saying, “Behold, how God hates him,” and yet to know assuredly in our own hearts that God loves us, to know it so assuredly, with the intercourse that lies between our heart and His, that we can freely let go the outward tokens of

His love, as the most true and trusty friends do not need to take gifts from one another for assurance of their affection—this, surely, is the perfection of a faithful life. It is the gathering up of all happiness into one happiness which is so rich that it can live without them all, and yet regally receives them into itself as the ocean receives the rivers.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 8.

THE STRENGTH OF OUR LIFE.

THERE are hours of mental darkness and depression for us in this sin-laden world. What shall we do? Resort to fiction, fashion, or forgetfulness produced by the wine-cup and the like? No; let us look up. The Lord is our light. There are times of fear and apprehension; but He is our salvation. We are sometimes painfully conscious of our weakness in presence of many hostile forces, from Satan, the world, and our own remaining and selfish love of sin. But let us not be afraid. He is the strength of our life. Reader, are you leaning on Him?

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 9.

FOR GOD'S INDWELLING.

IN this mixture of good and evil which we call man, this motley and medley which we call human character, it is the good and not the evil

which is the foundation colour of the whole. Man is a son of God on whom the devil has laid his hand, not a child of the devil whom God is trying to steal.....

The great truth of redemption, the great idea of salvation, is that the realm belongs to truth, that the lie is everywhere and always an intruder and a foe. He came in, therefore he may be driven out. When he is driven out, and man is purely man, then man is saved. It is the glory and the preciousness of the first mysterious, poetic chapters of Genesis that they are radiant all through their sadness with that truth.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 10.

REAL BLESSEDNESS.

THE world does say to us, "Enjoy;" and it is good for us to hear her invitation. But for the world to say, and for us to hear, nothing better or deeper than "Enjoy" is to turn the relation between the world and man into something hardly better than that which exists between the corn-field and the crows. It is clothing one's self with cobwebs. Only when the deeper communion, rich and full and strong, is going on below, between the depths of life and the depths of man—only then is the surface communion healthy and natural and good. He who is always hearing and answering

the call of life to be thoughtful and brave and self-sacrificing—he alone can safely hear the other cry of life, tempting him to be happy and enjoy.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 11.

CONDUCT AND CHARACTER.

CONDUCT is the mouth-piece of character. What a man is declares itself through what he does.....Character without conduct is like the lips without the trumpet, whose whispers die upon themselves and do not stir the world. Conduct without character is like the trumpet hung up in the wind, which whistles through it and means nothing. The world has a right to demand that all which claims to be character should utter itself through conduct which can be seen and heard. The world has a right to disallow all claims of character which do not utter themselves in conduct. “It may be real, it may be good,” the world has a right to say, “but I cannot know it or test it; and I am sure that however good and real it is, it is deprived of the condition of the best life and growth, which is activity.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 12.

LIGHT IN THE VALLEY.

A CHILD of God conscious of too weak faith and too little Christian courage is often met with. Here is an appeal to God that might well go up from such a heart: "O God of my salvation, as I am nearing the heavenly home, give me more devotion to Thee. Draw me away from a dark world. Put on me the armour of light. Help me to look heavenward and to realize what manner of life I shall live above, and so let me be spiritually minded. Keep me under the power of the world to come, for my blessed Saviour's sake. Amen."

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 13.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

YOU have your cross, my friend. You do not serve your Lord without surrender. There is pain in the duty which you do. But if in all your pain you know that God's love is becoming a dearer and plainer truth to you, and that you are finding the pleasure of obeying God, and that the vision of the world's redemption is growing more certain and bright, then you can be more than brave; you can triumph in every task, in every sacrifice. Your cross has won something of the

beauty and glory of your Lord's. Rejoice and be glad, for you are crucified with Christ.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 14.

A WONDER OF GRACE.

IT is wonderful that an infinite Creator and Ruler of the world and a fallen and a sinful human being can be in fellowship—the Creator showing Himself to the creature, and the creature leaning, as it were, upon the arm of the Creator. It is a wonder of grace. It comes about through One who is fittingly called Wonderful. Why should we not say hourly, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Yes, or to bear, for it is possible for us to “endure as seeing him who is invisible.”

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 13.

HIDDEN TREASURES.

THE man who has gone on his way, as most of us have to do, with little learning, but has also gone on his way doing duty faithfully, developing all the practical skill that is in him, and sometimes, just because their details are so dark to him, getting rich visions of the general light and glory of the great sciences, seen afar off, seen as great wholes, which often seem to be denied to the plodders who spend their lives in the close study of

those sciences—he is the man who knows how to be unlearned. It is a blessed thing that there is such a knowledge possible for overworked, practical men. The man who has that knowledge may be self-respectful in the face of all the colleges. He may stand before the kings of learning and not be ashamed; for his lot is as true a part of life as theirs, and he is bravely holding up his side of that great earth over which the plans of God are moving on to their completeness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 16.

A TRANSFIGURED LIFE.

MAKE your business the centre and fountain of your joy, and then life will be healthy and strong. Then you will not be running everywhere to find some outside pleasure which shall make up to you for your self-sacrificing toil; but the scenes of your self-sacrificing toil itself, your store or your office or your work-bench, shall be bright with associations of delight, and vocal with your thankfulness to the God who has given you, in them, the most radiant revelations of Himself. This is the only true transfiguration and success of labour and of life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 17.

GOD IS DIVINE.

NOW we are very apt to take it for granted that however we may differ in our definitions and our belief of the deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we are all at one there can be, and there is, no hesitation as to the deity of the Father. God is divine. God is God. And no doubt we do all assent in words to such a belief. But when we think what we mean by that word "God;" when we remember what we mean by "Father"—namely, the first source and the final satisfaction of a dependent nature—think how many of us look for neither of them any farther back or any farther on than this routine in which we live. We devote ourselves to it, we deck it with all the graces we can bestow upon it, because there is no higher fatherhood present to our thoughts—because we know no loftier God. Now, to such a man what is the first revelation that you want to make? Is it not the divinity of the Father?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 18.

IN QUIET DAYS.

MAKE your most simple act complete, do your most common daily duty from its divinest motive, and what a change will come!

Still your life will need days of retirement, when it will shut the gates upon the noisy whirl of action, and be alone with God. But it will not be upon them that it will mostly depend for spiritual nourishment. They will be like great exceptional banquets and extraordinary feasts of grace. The daily bread of spiritual life, the ordinary feeding of the soul on God, which really makes its sustenance, will be in the perpetual doing of the works of life for Him. The real sitting down to be fed will be mysteriously identical with the most eager and energetic standing on the feet to do His will!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 19.

ACCESS TO GOD.

EVERY act is made up of a purpose, a method, and a power. And so the purpose and the method and the power are here. What is the purpose or the end? "To the Father we all have access." What is the method? "Through Christ Jesus." What is the power? "By the Spirit." In this one total act the end, the method, and the power are distinguishable; and, what is more, each is distinctly personal.....This salvation, which is all the work of God, first, last, and mid-most, has its divine personalities distinct for its end and its method and its power. It is salvation

to the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit. The salvation is all one ; yet in it method, end, and power are recognizable. It is a three in one.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 20.

WORK FOR WORKERS.

IDLENESS standing in the midst of unattempted tasks is always proud ; work is always tending to humility. Work touches the keys of endless activity, opens the infinite, and stands awestruck before the immensity of what there is to do. Work brings a man into the good realm of facts. Work takes the dreamy youth who is growing proud in his closet over one or two sprouting powers which he has discovered in himself, and sets him out among the gigantic needs and the vast processes of the world, and makes him feel his littleness. Work opens the measureless fields of knowledge and skill that reach far out of sight.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 21.

MAMMON-WORSHIPPERS.

THERE are two perils connected with wealth : one is the abuse of it when it is possessed ; the other is the seeking of it as the portion of one's soul. Our Lord outlines the contrast between

treasures on earth and treasures in heaven, and urges the remembrance of this, as a rule of life, in His servants. What multitudes need this teaching! But, as the Searcher of hearts, He suggests another reason for laying up treasure in heaven. Where the treasure is the heart will also be. Oh, if we could only get mammon-worshippers to examine themselves! Reader, where is your treasure?

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 22.

THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT.

IN all artificial religiousness—all that is not bound to life, educated through life, and uttering itself in life—there are gaps and breaks. It is the sadness of every Christian experience—the loveless time between the moments of ecstatic apprehension—the total secularness between the points of religious performance.....The Spirit of God, expected only at certain seasons and by certain doors, finds sometimes those doors closed, and no welcome waiting Him at any other. It is only when we know that any door capable of admitting any influence may admit the blessed influence of God—only then can we be hopeful of keeping the breadth and variety of life, and at the same time of always receiving the culture and the grace of God. Let only the western shutters be open, and we shall see only the western sun. Let

all the windows be open and expectant, and from sunrise round to sunset there shall be no interval in the unbroken light. The sun, in the course of the day, will look into them all.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 23.

NEED FOR GOD.

THERE is in you a power of loving awe which needs infinite perfection and mercy to call it out and satisfy it. There is an affection which you cannot exercise towards any imperfect being. It is that mixture of admiration and reverence and fear and love which we call worship.....If this power is not utterly to die within you, do you not need God? If you are not to lose that highest reach of love and fear where, uniting, they make worship, must you not have God? Lo! before this expiring faculty the personal God comes and stands, and it lifts up its dying hands to reach after Him; it opens its dying eyes to look upon Him; as when a man is perishing of starvation the sight of bread summons him back to life. He need not die, but live, for here is his own life-food come to him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 24.

AVOID EVIL; FOLLOW GOOD.

TWO things the Word of God constantly enjoins on us—the avoidance of evil which dishonours God and brings on us His displeasure, and the faithful following of that which is good, as set forth in His commandments. Hebrew history shows the consequences of tempting God, and how strong is the plea for obedience! He who commands is not a tyrant and not a stranger, but “the Lord your God.” He said, “I will be a God to you;” and appropriating faith responds, “My Lord and my God,” and “faith worketh by love.”

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 25.

ANSWERING PRAYER.

I NEVER think of the silences of God without thinking how great is the delight which comes when any man discovers that God really has been answering him all the time when he thought that his prayers were all unheard. That must be one of the most exquisite joys of heaven. Among the vials which in the book of Revelation held the prayers of saints, there must be some which, when the saints who prayed them find them in their vision-time, shine with a brilliancy supremely precious. They are the prayers which seemed as if

they were not answered, but which really did bring down their blessing. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 26.

WITNESSING FOR GOD.

WORDS reveal our thoughts. Jesus is the divine Word from everlasting, so that it may well be said that He was before John the Baptist, His senior, and His herald, on earth. And this Word was made flesh. The first Adam sinned and fell. The Word comes into human nature that Satan may be overcome, God the Father revealed, and the image of God, blotted out by sin, be restored to fallen sinners through faith in Him. Do we believe in Him? Do we see the Father's glory in Him? Are we seeking to be like Him? Are we, in our places, bearing witness to Him? Grave questions these; let us not shrink from the duty and privilege.

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 27.

JUDGE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT.

THE great question, after all, is this: Shall we judge man by God, or God by man? Does light and understanding flow upward or downward? If we judge man by God, at once we have true and discriminating thoughts of human life.

We have absolute standards. We have a test of the worth of all we do or see. But if we judge God by man, we only have over again what the world has been so full of—the persuasions of self-interest, the disbelief in absolute righteousness, the changing standards of the changing times. Men have gone into the sanctuary of their own selfishness, the sanctuary of themselves, and straightway they have seemed to see an end of God. All sense of a supreme and awful Fatherhood on which all men depended, to which all action must go back for judgment, has been lost. No higher power than the human has seemed to be moving under and giving meaning to the events of ordinary life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 28.

THE GUIDING HAND.

THE prayer of the Seventy-third Psalm may well be uttered by a believer. How truly may one say: “Lord, make me meek and lowly; show me my own heart in the light of Thy holy law, that it may be contrite. I have need of guidance at every step of my way. Guide me by Thy counsel, that I may be saved from errors of judgment and from practical mistakes. Impart unto me the wisdom that cometh from above, that I may discriminate between the good and the bad, between the service of Christ and the service of

the world, and conduct me at length to the kingdom of Thy glory, for Christ's sake. Amen."

JOHN HALL.

Sept. 29.

PERFECTING LIFE.

IS it success in the struggle of life simply to get through with decency and die without disgrace or shame? Is it success in the struggle of life just to have so laid hold on God's mercy, to have so made our peace with Him, that we know we shall not be punished for our sins? Is it success in the struggle of life even to have so lived in His presence that every day has been bright with the sense that He was taking care of us? These things are very good; but if the purpose of God's government of the world and of us is to bring about our perfection, then the real victory in the struggle can be nothing less than the accomplishment in us of that which it is the object of all His government to accomplish in the world. When, truly obedient, we have been made like Him whom we obey, then—only then—we have overcome in the struggle of life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Sept. 30.

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY.

THE things that are spiritual bring their own sidelong testimonies of themselves. They touch my sense of beauty. They make me feel how good it would be for the world if they were true. I hear their movement in the depths of history.....Yet there stands the separate glory of the revelation of that day when to me, at last beginning to try to do right, the God whose faint reports have come to me pours in upon my opened soul the glorious conviction of His righteousness and love; and my soul, in which I have half believed, becomes the centre of my life—*becomes* my life, that for which all the other parts of me are made. Then in the knowledge which pours through my opened conscience, then I know with an assurance which makes all the knowledge that I had before seem but a guess and a dim suspicion.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 1.

ABIDING IN CHRIST.

CAN he in whom the words of Christ abide pray an unanswered prayer?.....Can he in whom this word of Christ's abides, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," go on clamouring with miserable, mercenary prayers for

food and drink, houses and lands, as if they were the first things to seek? Or he in whom this everlasting word of Christ abides, "In the world ye shall have tribulation"—can you conceive of him as vexing God with querulous supplications to be released from suffering, and not delighting God with holy petitions that he may be brave and patient under it—that he may be purified and made perfect by it?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 2.

THE THREE LUSTS.

THE lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—these, according to the last survivor of Christ's "disciples," make up the essence of worldly life, and they are the elements of attraction which the old serpent has been presenting to all who will listen to him ever since the temptation of our first parents. How many are fascinated by the kind of wisdom which he commends among his refuges of lies! Blessed be Thy name, O Lord Jesus, for the victory which Thou, the second Adam, didst secure. Oh, make us sharers in it, and help us to resist Satan, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 3.

TRUTH IS INFINITE.

THE more one thinks and studies, the more he becomes aware how infinite is truth..... Upon the subject which we know best we are still out at sea. Every time a fellow-man's finger touches our faith it makes it rock, and compels us to feel that, however well anchored it is, so that it will not drift, it is very far from being bolted and mortised into the solid ground..... We know this is not good; yet we very often do not see how it is to be escaped. The real escape, I think, lies here. The Christian faith is not primarily a belief in Christian truth, but a belief in Christ. All truth which we believe, we believe in and because of Him. We know that, though we have truly taken Him for our Master, He is very far yet from having told us all that He has to tell. That knowledge binds us to Him not merely by what He has already taught us, but by the far greater truth which He is keeping for us, which He will give us in His good time.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 4.

OUR CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN.

“MY kingdom is not of this world,” said Christ. And why is it not? The apostle tells us it is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Ghost. These three principles are not of this world ; they came down from the Father of lights and of mercies. But are the kingdoms of this world under no obligation to receive them ? Is it come to this, that because a principle is not of this world, the world has no concern with it ? Truth, love, holiness are all from above, and on that very account their claim on men is stronger, and they are to be accepted gladly by the children of men.

REV. DR. HENRY COOKE.

Oct. 5.

CLEAR SHINING AFTER RAIN.

IN almost every Christian's experience come times of despondency and gloom, when there seems to be a depletion of the spiritual life, when the fountains that used to burst and sing with water are grown dry, when love is loveless and hope hopeless, and enthusiasm so utterly dead and buried that it is hard to believe that it ever lived. At such times there is nothing for us to do but hold with eager hands to the bare, rocky truths of our religion, as a shipwrecked man hangs to a strong, rugged cliff when the great retiring wave and all the little eddies all together are trying to sweep him back into the deep.....Then when the tide turns, and we can hold ourselves lightly where we once had to hang heavily, when faith grows

easy, and God and Christ and responsibility and eternity are once more the glory and delight of happy days and peaceful nights, then certainly there is something new in them—a new colour, a new warmth. The soul has caught a new idea of God's love when it has not only been fed but rescued by Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 6.

NOT MY WILL.

JESUS was the Son of God, the same in substance with the Father, His equal in power and in glory. But He condescended to be God's "righteous servant," and His own words express the submission of His will to the Father's. If the divine Redeemer speaks and feels thus, how submissive to God ought we to be! Illness may prostrate us, death may bereave us, poverty may try us, the tears of the widowed or of the fatherless may flow from our eyes; but let us aim at having the same mind in us that was in Christ, and the divine Father will carry us through, and give us the victory at length.

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 7.

LEST WE FORGET.

AS Christianity is the most vivid of all religions, with its personally-manifested God, there is a more perfect unity in a Christian life than in any

other. It keeps all its parts, and from its consummations looks back with gratitude and love to its beginnings. The crown that it casts before the throne at last is the same that it felt trembling on its brow in the first ecstatic sense of Christ's forgiveness, and that has been steadily glowing into greater clearness as perfecting love has more and more completely cast out fear. The feet that go up to God into the mountain at the end are the same that first put off their shoes beside the burning bush. This is why the Christian, more than other men, not merely dares but loves to look back and remember.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 8.

YOUR WHOLE HEART.

GOD, the Father of men, is not satisfied if His children give Him simply gratitude for His mercies or the most loyal obedience to His will; He wants also, as the fulfilment of their love to Him, the enthusiastic use of their intellects, intent to know everything that it is possible for men to know about their Father and His ways. That is what is meant by loving God with the mind. And is there not something sublimely beautiful and touching in this demand of God that the noblest part of His children's nature should come to Him? "Understand Me! understand Me!"

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 9.

"WHO GIVEST ALL THINGS."

GOOD stewards God's servants are to be, not only worshipping Him and trusting Him, but employing even the means He puts in their hands for His honour. Are all the wealthy happy? Are their lives burdened with care because of the wealth connected therewith? Are their home circles broken up with strifes, of which wealth is the occasion? Would it be so if God were devoutly honoured with the substance, not from the will of a testator, but from the living hand? Reflect, reader, whether you have large or only moderate means. Is God, the giver, honoured with them?

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 10.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS.

SHALL you be God's or the world's? Be both! Not in any low, miserable compromise, not by the effort to serve God and mammon, but by a brave and filial questioning of God, that He may tell you just how He wants a child of His to live in this peculiar time and under these peculiar circumstances of yours. There is a type of universal human life in harmony with the best life of all the ages, in tune with the sublimest and finest spiritual music of the universe, in harmony also with the profoundest dictates of your own personal con-

science, which you can live in your parlour and your shop; and that life you can reach if you are consecrated to God in your own place and time. If you live that life, the world of the present owns you and claims you and rejoices in you. The most distant life of man looks in on you and recognizes you as a part of itself, and says, "Well done!" Up from your own conscience speaks your self-approval. And God your Father bends His love around you, and out of His blessing feeds you with His strength.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 11.

TO KNOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

HEAVEN is not only real because His humanity is there, not merely glorious because His greatness is there. It is dear because His love is there—the love which filled His earthly life, the love of the miracle and of the wayside teaching and of the cross. The nearness and the glory might be there, and yet heaven not lay hold of our hearts. We might be well content to stand far off and gaze. We might not want to go there. We might not listen for messages, nor send our feeble voices forth in prayer. But now our Christ is there, our Saviour, what wonder if the earth a thousand times seems dull and wearisome, and always gets its best brightness from that other

world in which He is, of which this is the vestibule !

PHILLIPS BROOKS

Oct. 12.

CONQUERING DIFFICULTIES.

MOSES was a true servant of God, called to and fitted for His great work. But Moses had times of great anxiety. Then he made his appeal to God, recalled God's gracious words, and as we read the record we see how faithfully God fulfilled His promises to him. So God's children, passing through a fallen world, and with remaining evil within—against which there must be watchfulness and war—have times of fear, of deep anxiety ; and there is one way, and but one, of getting out of them : “Call upon me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 13.

TWO KINDS OF UNBELIEF.

YOU say, “Why is it so easy for others to believe—so hard for me?” There is a willing and an unwilling unbelief. Man must not complain that the sun does not shine on him because he shuts his eyes. If it is unwilling unbelief, if you really want the truth, if you are not afraid to submit to it as soon as you shall see it.....then you are not to be pitied. To climb the mountain

on its hardest side, where its granite ribs press out most ruggedly, where you must skirt round chasms and clamber down and up ravines—all this has its compensations. You know the mountain better when you reach its top. It is a realler, a nobler, and so a dearer thing. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 14.

OUR DEAD SINS.

THE sins Christ has forgiven are dead, but they are not gone. If none of the dead go from us, if when death comes a new and finer life begins, and he whom we call dead is with us in sweetest, subtlest portion of his life, with everything of harshness, every disagreement, every power of harm taken out, why may it not be so with our dead sins? It is so, surely! There is a soul in them which lives on still while their body of wickedness has perished—a soul of patience, of watchfulness, of gratitude, and of never-dying love.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 15.

NO TIME WASTED.

CONTINUITY and economy, these are the laws of Him who is leading us, the Captain of our salvation. He always binds the future to the past, and He wastes nothing. Oh, there

are some here who want to get away from all their past—who, if they could, would fain begin all over again. Their life with Christ seems one long failure. But you must learn—you must let God teach you—that the only way to get rid of your past is to get a future out of it. God will waste nothing. There is something in your past—something, even if it only be the sin of which you have repented, which, if you can put it into the Saviour's hands, will be a new life for you.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 16.

"NOT SLOTHFUL IN BUSINESS."

WE are never thankful as we ought to be for God's goodness and mercy. He gives us honest business. Let us be grateful, and not slothful in it. Coldness of heart chills the life. Let us be fervent in spirit. We may have trials; but if we feel that we are serving the Lord, they will not weigh us down. In our Christian hope we can rejoice, even though tried here, and we can exercise patience. Think of being able to say, "It is only a little while, and I shall be in my heavenly home!" But you say, dear reader, this hope is not strong within you. Then here are two prescriptions: Look unto Jesus, and continue instant in prayer.

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 17.

TWO SIDES OF LIFE.

IF you look back to the men who have taught you most, and, in the fuller light where you now stand, study their character, you will surely find that the real secret of their power lay here in the harmonious blending of the knowing and the loving powers in their nature—in the opening of their nature on both sides, so that truth entered in freely here and you entered in freely there, and you and truth met, as it were, familiarly in the hospitality of their great characters. The man who has only the knowing power active lets truth in, but it finds no man to feed. The man who has only the loving power active lets man in, but he finds no truth to feed on. The real teacher welcomes both.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 18.

A UNIVERSAL SAVIOUR.

IF there is any part of your life not wholly consecrated to Him; if there is any of His love which you have not appropriated; if there is any undone duty which, as you do it, will open a new door into His heart; if there is any word by speaking which you may the more utterly commit yourself to Him,—just as surely as in any of these ways you deepen your own spiritual life and make Jesus

more your Saviour, just so surely you will believe in foreign missions, and long to tell all men that He is their Saviour too. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 19.

REFRESHMENT.

ARE you weary, dear friend, in the struggle with the world without and sin within? Here is One who can refresh you. Have you come to Christ? If so, you will be cared for in all the future in the degree in which you are learning of Him. We are often thoughtless and forgetful students, and for our good we are chastened. But in the toils and troubles and bereavements of the present we can have rest in a trusted Saviour, and when the sorrows are over we shall have rest in heaven.

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 20.

FAITH'S TRANSFIGURATION.

IF in doing (your work) the principal blessing of it all was that it permitted you to look into God's soul and see how self-complete and perfect and supreme He was—how, after all His workings, it was not in His works but in His nature, not in His doing but in His being, that God's true glory lay—if as you worked with Him you really looked into His nature and discerned all this, then when

He takes your work away and bids you no longer to do good and obedient things, but only to be good and obedient, surely that is not the death of faith. That may be faith's transfiguration.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 21.

SERVING IN LITTLE THINGS.

NEVER be afraid to bring the transcendent mysteries of our faith, Christ's life and death and resurrection, to the help of the humblest and commonest of human wants. There is a sort of preaching which keeps them for the great emergencies, and soothes the common sorrows and rebukes the common sins with lower considerations of economy. Such preaching fails. It appeals neither to the lower nor to the higher perceptions of mankind. It is useful neither as law nor as gospel. It is like a river that is frozen too hard to be navigable, but not hard enough to bear. Never fear to bring the sublimest motives to the smallest duty, and the most infinite comfort to the smallest trouble. They will prove that they belong there if only the duty and the trouble are real.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 22.

WHENCE COMETH HELP.

I TURN to Jesus, and in all His human life there seems to me nothing more divine than the instinctive and unerring way in which He always reached up to the highest, and refused to be satisfied with any lower help. In the desert the devil offered Him bread—good, wholesome bread. Apparently He could have had it if He would; but He replied, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”.....On the cross they held up to Him the sponge full of vinegar; but the thirst that was in Him demanded a deeper satisfaction, and He gave His soul to His Father and finished His obedient work. So it was everywhere with Him. The souls beside Him found their helps and satisfactions in the superficial things of earth.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 23.

HEAVENLY GAIN.

AS you grow better.....you sweep up out of the grasp of money, praise, ease, distinction. You sweep up into the necessity of truth, courage, virtue, love, and God. The gravitation of the earth grows weaker; the gravitation of the stars takes stronger and stronger hold upon you. And on the other hand, as you grow worse, as you go

down, the terrible opposite of all this comes to pass. The highest necessities let you go, and the lowest necessities take tighter hold of you. Still, as you go down, you are judged by what you can do without and what you cannot do without. You come down at last where you cannot do without a comfortable dinner and an easy bed, but you can do without an act of charity or a thought of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

"QUIETLY WAIT."

Oct. 24.

TRIALS come on us here. Tempests threaten us on the voyage of life. Our spirits become restless. We look right and left, up and down, for a solution of hard problems that perplex us. Dear reader, bear with and carry out one suggestion. Think how your heavenly Father has cared for you hitherto. Consider, is He unequal to the work of carrying you on? Has He ceased to be all-wise, all-powerful? Has He taken back the promise that all things shall work together for your good? No. Then carry to Him your present difficulty; and says Jeremiah, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 23.

SOLITUDE NOT LONELINESS.

SOLITUDE makes the consciousness; society develops, multiplies, and confirms it. That which would have remained only a quality in Jesus, if He had stayed in the desert, becomes a life when He goes forth into the world. What Goethe wisely says of all men does not lose its truth when we are thinking of the Son of Man: "A talent shapes itself in stillness, but a character in the tumult of the world." This is Christ's balance between solitude and society. Each makes the other necessary. With us they often lose this value, because they are not set in any relation to each other. Solitude is barren, and so society is frivolous. Solitude creates no consciousness for society to ripen. Solitude is like an unfertile seed, and society is like an unplanted ground.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 26.

LIVE THE LIFE.

PAUL tells of Christians who "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." There are some men and women who haunt their lives and make them cheerless for fear they will not be able to meet the king of terrors when he comes. Dear friends, learn from your

Saviour that no duty reveals itself till we approach it. The duty of death, when you approach it, will light itself up, you may be sure, and seem very easy to your soul. Till then do not trouble yourself about it. To live, and not to die, is your work now. When your time comes, the Christ who conquered death will prove Himself its Lord, and pave the narrow river to a sea of glass for you to cross. The work of life is living, and not, as we are so often told, preparing to die, except by living well.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 27.

FIGHTING FOR VICTORY.

THERE will come a world where there will be no temptation—a garden with no serpent, a city with no sin. The harvest day will come, and the wheat be gathered safe into the Master's barn. It will be very sweet and glorious. Our tired hearts rest on the promises with peaceful delight. But that time is not yet. Here are our tempted lives, and here, right in the midst of us, stands our tempted Saviour. If we are men, we shall meet temptation as He met it, in the strength of the God who is the Father of whom all men are children. Every temptation that attacks us attacked Him, and was conquered. We are fighting with a defeated enemy. We are struggling for a victory

which is already won. That may be our strength and assurance as we recall, whenever our struggle becomes hottest and most trying, the wonderful and blessed day when Jesus was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 28.

ABIDING JOY.

EVERY emotion has its higher and its lower forms. It means but little to me if I know only that a man is happy or unhappy if I do not know of what sort his joy or sorrow is. But all the emotions are certainly tempted to larger action if it is realized that the world in which they take their birth is but for a little time, that its fashion passes away, that the circumstances of an experience are very transitory. That must drive me down into the essence of every experience, and make me realize it in the profoundest and the largest way.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 29.

RESIGNATION.

THE faith of a Christian is sometimes tried in looking at the sorrows of those whom he regards as sincere believers. Still more is the sufferer himself tried under providential calamities; and

the question is forced on the heart, Am I a true child of God? If I were, would He thus deal with me? Have I been deceiving myself? Then it is that the ways of God have to be studied in the light of the Bible. The lively stones have to be cut so as to fit into their places in the building. The jewels have to be polished. In wisdom and goodness God's hand chastens; then the believing heart is lifted into nearness to Him, and then He works deliverance. "Thy will be done."

JOHN HALL.

Oct. 30.

SINFUL SELF.

ANY man who is good for anything, if he is always thinking about himself, will come to think himself good for nothing very soon. It is only a fop or a fool who can bear to look at himself all day long without disgust. And so the first thing for a man to do, who wants to use his best powers at their best, is to get rid of self-consciousness, to stop thinking about himself and how he is working, altogether. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Oct. 31.

"THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT."

A CHRISTIAN has been renewed and enlightened by the Spirit. He may be expected to walk in the light, no more doing the deeds of

darkness. This is acceptable to the Lord; and to those so walking God gives usefulness. They set an example; they witness for God; they show that the fear of God purifies heart and life. But this is not done in their own wisdom or power. It is "the fruit of the Spirit." Would we be good, righteous, true? Then let the Spirit work within us. Let us be led and guided by this divine Counsellor. Walk in the Spirit.

JOHN HALL.

Nov. 1.

FOLLOWING GOD.

"**W**HY cannot I follow Thee now? Why this delay of the divinest life? Why so much duty with so little strength? Why only the journey and the hunger and the thirst, without the brook of refreshment by the way?" No man can wholly answer these questions, but multitudes of saints, if they could speak, would tell you how in their hindered lives God kept them true to such experience as they had attained; and so it was that by-and-by, either before or after the great enlightenment of death, the hindrance melted away, and they who had been crying for years, "Lord, why cannot we follow Thee now?" passed forth into the multitude of those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 2.

WORK DONE FOR CHRIST.

BOTH in belief and in duty this is the work of the Holy Spirit—to make belief profound by showing us the hearts of the things that we believe in, and to make duty delightful by setting us to doing it for Christ. Oh, in this world of shallow believers and weary, dreary workers, how we need that Holy Spirit! Remember, we may go our way, ignoring all the time the very forces that we need to help us do our work. The forces still may help us. The Holy Spirit may help us—will surely help us—just as far as He can, even if we do not know His name, or ever call upon Him. But there is so much more that He might do for us if we would only open our hearts and ask Him to come into them.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 3.

THE LIGHT INVISIBLE.

WH^O of us has not bowed his will to some supreme law, accepted some obedience as the atmosphere in which his life must live, and found at once that his mind's darkness turned to light, and that many a hard question found its answer? Who has not sometimes seemed to see it all as clear as daylight, that not by the sharpening of the intellect to supernatural acuteness, but

by the submission of the nature to its true authority, man was at last to conquer truth? that not by agonizing struggles over contradictory evidence, but by the harmony with Him in whom the answers to all our doubts are folded—a harmony with Him brought by obedience to Him—our doubts must be enlightened?

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 4.

"SHOW US THE FATHER."

A WORD is the manifestation of a thought. If I wish to communicate a thought to you, that thought takes shape in words. You cannot see my thought, but what is there comes through the channels of speech, and so travels through your ear to your mind, and becomes part of your thought. Now Christ became the Word to take the thought out of the mind and heart of God, and translate that thought so that we could understand it, so that what was before invisible and inaudible and beyond the reach of our senses comes into our minds and hearts as something that was in God's mind and heart, but now is in ours. Beautiful indeed is this as an expression of what Christ is to us. You want to know God; well, then, study Christ, and you will know all about Him. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," said Jesus.

ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

Nov. 5.

OUR CONCEPTION OF GOD.

THE most important of all things is the conception which a man has of God. Given a man's idea of God, and the degree of sincerity with which God is worshipped, and there can be no difficulty in discovering the moral quality of the worshipper. Find a man whose idea of God is low, and you find a heathen. Find a man whose conception of God is lofty, pure, tender, loving, and you find a life ennobled and enriched with proportionate thought and charity. A God infinite in power, and in wisdom, and in goodness, and in love—a God to whom sin is abominable—such a God ought to produce a man of purity, of dignity, of largeness of heart, and of nobleness of character.

DAVID GREGG.

Nov. 6.

A VISION OF GOD.

BEFORE any work for God there always comes the vision of God. To behold Him, to be lifted up above our troubled hearts, above our worries and discords, and to be absolutely sure that we have spoken with God, and He has spoken with us—this is the indispensable preliminary of doing anything whatsoever in God's service. If a servant of God is uncertain of his Master, he will

be uncertain of everything that follows in his service. If you and I have no doubt about having seen God, then our divine service will grow sweeter and clearer and easier every year we live. I have had men say to me, "Didn't Paul's Christian life begin with the question, 'What wilt thou have me to do?'" No, it did not; no life begins with that question. It began with the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" When Paul had settled that it was the risen Christ who appeared to him, then came the much easier question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" We cannot feed the multitude out of an empty basket; we cannot present the Lord until we have seen the Lord.

W. H. P. FAUNCE.

Nov. 7.

MY PLACE.

GOD seeks to mould us by circumstances, and you must believe that God has put you down just where you are because your present position is the very best place in the universe to make you what He wants you to become. He could have made you a king or a bishop, a millionaire or a statesman; but He passed all these by, and has put you just where you are. You may be a stableman, a cook, or a housemaid; but God had the whole universe to choose from, and He wanted

to do His best for you, and He put your soul just where it is, because He knew that there you would be surrounded by the best conditions to make you what He wanted you to become.

F. B. MEYER.

Nov. 8.

UNDONE DUTIES.

IF, as we profess to believe, all right is for ever antagonistic to all wrong, then what a lesson there is to us in the steadfast law and faithfulness of all the universe around us! How each day coming to its task of crowding labours, each night bringing in its blessed peace of sleep in obedience to the old command of Genesis, brings with it a remonstrance against our faint-heartedness and constant wavering of loyalty and truth! The stars in their courses fight against us as they fought against Sisera. The duty that they are doing cries shame on the duty that we are leaving undone every day.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 9.

LABOURING TOGETHER.

CHRIST had His word of encouragement and strength to say to every soldier in His army, and to every worker at His work.....Not merely scholars in their studies, not merely missionaries

in their martyrdoms, not merely saints in their closed closets, but every working man and woman everywhere—they are all His. The spirit which proceeds from Him may pour through the whole mass and find out every particle, and give to each an impetus towards its own next higher stage of life, and so bear the whole along together towards the completion of each man and the completion of the whole social and business life, and politics and education, and then, as the crown of them all, religion.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 10.

INTELLIGENT FAITH.

IGNORANCE is the chief sin of our time. You say unbelief is. I think not. You say the great need is faith. But when we have intelligence we shall have faith. We need knowledge of God. I do think that people need most in this world to-day belief in God. It is a very rare man that truly and deeply believes in God. If you believe in God, you see Him in everything—in the birds and flowers, and brightness and beauty, as well as when the storms gather and sorrow sweeps over you. If a man believes there is a God, his belief controls him all through his being. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may glorify God." In order to make other

men think of God we must believe in Him, and must have such a strong obedience coming out of our belief that men will take knowledge of us that we believe in God and know Him.

ALEXANDER M'KENZIE.

Nov. 11.

MY LIFE FOR GOD.

SO long as a man is living for himself and honouring himself, there is an association, however remote it may be, with all the lowest forms of selfishness in which men have lived; but the moment a man begins to live in genuine adoration of the absolute good, and worship God, he parts company from all these lower orders of human life.....When you say to God, "O God, take me, for the highest thing that I can do with myself is to give myself to Thee".....you sweep into the current of the best, the holiest, and the most richly human of our humanity, which in every age has dedicated itself to God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 12.

"IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES."

IF we want to live more than ordinarily spiritual lives as Christian men, it is necessary that we be great feeders upon the Word of God, which is

not only quick, but powerful. De Quincey divided all literature into the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. This is pre-eminently the literature of power. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." And still further, we might make this additional statement: that without spiritual Bible study, other spiritual helps may often lead us into danger, and ultimately they may be abandoned. Take the matter of meditation: without the Bible, meditation may lead a man to morbid introspection. Secret prayer is not a monologue, but is a dialogue.

JOHN R. MOTT.

Nov. 13.

SERVING GOD.

HOW very rare it is to find an exceedingly useful and hard-working man whose energy and devotion are not tainted by self-satisfaction! But here, if all we do is but to make ourselves channels through which the power of God shall flow—if, when a man stands up and calls a whole city out of corruptness, or a whole race out of slavery, he is deeply and genuinely conscious that it is not he that speaks, but God (as Jesus, you remember, told His disciples it should be with them), then that is won which is so rare in the great workers (or in little ones either)—all self-

satisfaction disappears. The man is lost in the cause; nay, the cause itself is lost in joy that God, whom to know is life, has made Himself hereby a little more known to men.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 14.

HE WILL BE A FATHER.

THE temple of God and idols cannot be properly together. But God's people are temples of His. Anything, then, that is set up in place of God must be kept away. It is not always easy to define "the world," but where the Christianity of the Bible is professed the thing is understood well enough. "There, now, they profess to be godly, but they love the world just as we do." So separation from all that which ignores God is a Christian duty. "But how much we lose!" No. "I will be a Father unto you." That will bring rank, riches, pleasure, and peace.

JOHN HALL.

Nov. 15.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

UNDER one Fatherhood the whole world becomes sacred. The old distinctions of useful and useless knowledge will not hold. The responsibility of each man for the working of his intellect must be acknowledged. The sin of mental

carelessness or wilfulness must take its place among the sins against which men struggle, and for which they repent. The application of moral standards to history, to art, and to pure letters must be learned and taught. The isolation of the artistic impulse from all moral judgments and purposes must be restrained and remedied. The whole thought of art must be enlarged and mellowed till it develops a relation to the spiritual and moral natures, as well as to the senses of mankind. It will lose, perhaps, the purity and simplicity which has belonged to the idea of art in classic and unchristian times, but it will become more and more a part of the general culture of human life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 16.

"MY PEACE I GIVE."

I KNOW that there is such a thing as *peace* to seek and find. But here is my work to do, to worry over whether I am doing it right, to keep myself restless over how it will turn out. "*My work*," I say ; but if I can know that it is not my work but God's, should I not cast away my restlessness, even while I worked on more faithfully and untiringly than ever?.....If I could pour through all the good plan over which I am labouring the certainty that all that is good in it is God's

and must succeed, how that certainty would drive the darkness out of it! and while I worked harder than ever, my work would have something of the calmness with which He labours always.....To every poor sufferer, to every discouraged worker, to every man who cannot think much of himself, and yet is too brave to despair, this is the courage that the gospel gives. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 17.

FREE WILL.

MANY a man seeks to excuse himself for his sinful habits by saying, "If God wants me to be good and happy, why doesn't He *make* me good?" We cannot really be good unless we *might* be evil. We are endowed by Almighty God with the awful but blessed prerogative of free will, and God will not ignore that feature of His image with which He has endowed us. He would not have us serve Him with a merely mechanical obedience; from us He looks for a moral obedience, and that involves preference. The heavenly bodies serve God with an undeviating obedience; to them He has given a law which cannot be broken. But the obedience of a little child in some trifling matter is something infinitely higher, because it is a moral act of surrender of will to will. We can only become pure by choosing purity

when we might choose self-indulgence. We can only become loving when we sacrifice ourselves in one way or another for others when we might cling to our own self-interest. We can only become really true and brave when we stand by honour and truth when we might gain some advantage by swerving from truth, by compromise or concession. Temptation is necessary for the moral development of a moral being.

A. C. A. HALL.

Nov. 18.

THE BEAUTY OF GOODNESS.

I BELIEVE our lives are too prosaic. I think we might all live up in a purer air.....I think the strange beauty of the nature all around us might be more fully grasped. I think that, made pure and strong by thoughts like these, we might all make our lives to poems:—

“ Be good, be true, and let who will be clever ;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long ;
And so make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand, sweet song.”

If it be poetry, as I think it is, to go out to-morrow morning with all our closets open and all our moral enginery in play, ready to see the miracle that the sun will bring up over the river and the hills once more, ready to learn the lesson of the earth—a work to do, and manly strength to

do it—ready to sympathize with and worship all that is worthy of our sympathy and homage, ready to grow more godlike in our reverence for God,—if this be poetry, then fifty poems may begin to-morrow, with earth's grand music for them all to sing to, and heaven at last to crown the victor with a sweet "Well done."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 19.

THROUGH DARKNESS UP TO GOD.

IT is worth while to live honestly, since we have a heaven to look forward to ; and certain it is—as certain as that night follows day—that our condition hereafter will be decided, not by our professions, nor yet by our creed, but by that combination of qualities which are summed up in the one awful but also glorious word—character.

Above the din and confusion of our material life we hear voices which tell us that heaven is not far off, and that the two worlds can talk to each other.

G. H. HEPWORTH.

Nov. 20.

ALL THINGS GOD'S.

AS long as we dare to think that secular life must be a separate existence from the spiritual—that earthly engagements cannot be fulfilled in uninterrupted communion with God—

just so long are we living outside the purposes of God, contradicting the majesty of our true nature, and denying the efficacy of the gospel of the Lord Jesus. There may be a manifold manifestation of the great purposes of life, but throughout all these manifestations there ought to run one great unity of principle, one purpose, one idea ; and unless that unity of life pervades every operation in which we engage, it is no wonder that we lack communion with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, that religion is divorced from business, and that what men call the privileges of the gospel are in their minds disassociated with the duties and the demands of daily existence.

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

Nov. 21

IMMORTALITY OF INFLUENCE.

THE things we do on earth do not cease to have influence after our death. If you speak a word into the air, or sing a song, the reverberations will quiver around and around the world and through space for ever ; if you drop a pebble into the sea, its plash will start ripples which will tremble through the water, on and on until they have broken on every shore of the ocean. So it is true that every good word spoken in this world, every sweet song sung, every holy

thought or impulse of blessing started, shall go on and on until the end of all things. In this sense our works shall follow us. The things we do for Christ here, the inspirations we put into immortal lives, the lessons we teach, the influences of good we start, shall not die with us.

J. R. MILLER.

Nov. 22.

FAITH AND TRUST.

FAITH is totally distinct from trust. By faith we claim; by trust we prove that we have taken, and that the gifts of God have become to us what God in His omnipotence intended them to be.

Faith takes into our soul what God in His mercy reveals, and believes God against all comers. Trust hands over to God what God has given us, and says, "Keep, Lord, and use, for I cannot." Then comes a holy confidence and assurance which prevents us from being disturbed under any circumstances whatever, and out of which comes a boldness which enables us to act for the glory of God. Faith when it has conceived brings forth trust, and trust when it is finished brings forth confidence and boldness.

H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE.

Nov. 23.

STRENGTH AVAILETH NOT.

WE must watch not only our weak points, but our strong points; for many of the great Bible heroes failed on their strong points—Moses in his meekness and Job in his patience. There is nothing in which men are naturally strong that can stand against the power of our great adversary. Yielding is the result of long previous decline: the sin which breaks out in the manifestation has far-reaching roots, and to be confessed properly one needs to go back from the act to the intention, and from the intention to the purpose, through the weeks or months of previous life, until one gets at last to the beginning of the sin. Then confess it, in order that it may be expiated before God. F. B. MEYER.

Nov. 24.

EXPERIENCE A GREAT TEACHER.

TO give a *perfect* rule of life, humanity needs many things besides laws; example, experience, mistakes, departures—all are needed. To safely navigate the seas the compass, quadrant and chronometer are not sufficient. By the aid of these the mariner knows which way to go and where he is; but without the discoveries, mistakes

and disasters of those who have gone before him he is in constant danger. These mistakes and disasters are not put down on his chart for him to imitate and follow, but to show him where there is danger, that he may avoid it; and every such place marked on his chart has been the scene of greater or less disaster, and its location on the chart is the highest evidence of honesty and wisdom. Viewed from this standpoint, the sins and mistakes of the patriarchs, related by inspiration, show a faithful record, and point out to us the danger by showing the disastrous results and telling of the condemnation of God. Yet all writers against Christianity have used these departures to disprove the inspiration of the Bible. As well might they use the past accidents and disasters on the seas against the art of navigation.

J. D. DRIVER.

Nov. 23.

TIME SPEEDS AWAY.

THE shortness of life spreads the feeling of criticalness all through life, and makes each moment prepare for the next—makes life prepare for life. This is its power. Blessed is he who feels it. Blessed is he in whose experience each day and each hour has all the happiness and all the solemnity of a parent towards the day and the hour to which it gives birth, stands sponsor for it,

holds it for baptism at the font of God. Such days are sacred in each other's eyes. The life in which such days succeed each other is a holy family, with its moments "bound each to each by natural piety."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 26.

"I AM THE TRUTH."

THE great fact concerning the intellectual life of Jesus is this, that in Him the intellect never works alone. You never can separate its workings from the complete operation of the whole nature. He never simply knows, but always loves and resolves at the same time. Truth which the mind discovers becomes immediately the possession of the affections and the will. It cannot remain in the condition of mere knowledge. Indeed, knowledge is no word of Jesus. Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, is always talking about knowledge; Jesus, in the Gospel of John, is always talking about truth. So genuine is the unity of His being, that what comes to Him as knowledge is pressed and gathered into every part of Him, and fills His entire nature as truth. The rays of intellectual light are absorbed into the whole substance of the spontaneous affections and the unerring will. The right and the true, the wrong and the false, are not separable from one another.

The life is simple because of its completeness. It is the true unity of a man.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 27.

"THE TRUTH IN LOVE."

POETS have sung the praise of gentleness. They are re-echoing divine teaching to a public servant of the Master. There is danger of self-assertion, of passion mingling with reproof and destroying its moral influence. Are you, Christian reader, vexed, offended, or injured by a fellow-creature? Speak gently. Are you constrained to warn another against wrong-doing? Do it gently. Overcome evil with good. Are you condemning vice? Speak the truth in love.

JOHN HALL.

Nov. 28.

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING."

PRAYER involves far more than we ordinarily think—a certain necessary relation between the soul and God. The condition of prayer is personal—it looks to character. How this rebukes our ordinary slipshod notions of what it is to pray! God's mercy-seat is no mere stall set by the vulgar roadside, where every careless passer-by may put an easy hand out to snatch any glittering

blessing that catches his eye. It stands in the holiest of holies. We can come to it only through veils and by altars of purification. To enter into it we must enter into God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Nov. 29.

THE ABIDINGNESS OF GOD.

OUR fellow-men change, and so we often lose those whom we counted friends. We ourselves change; and how full of changes is the world around us! But God reveals Himself as without shadow of turning: whom He loves He loves to the end. And so it is that Christ, His Son, is set before us as "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Let us rejoice in this. At the same time let us remember that He is unchangeable in His holiness. Let us avoid the sins which He hates. Oh that we may be sanctified wholly!

JOHN HALL.

Nov. 30.

LESSONS FROM NATURE.

THERE is something so sublimely positive in Nature. She never kills for the mere sake of killing; but every death is but one step in the vast weaving of the web of life. She has no process of destruction which, as you turn it to the other side and look at it in what you know to be

its truer light, you do not see to be a process of construction. She gets rid of her wastes by ever new plans of nutrition. This is what gives her such a courageous, hopeful, and enthusiastic look, and makes men love her as a mother, and not fear her as a tyrant. They see by small signs, and dimly feel, this positiveness of her workings, which it is the glory of natural science to reveal more and more.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 1.

WEAKNESS OF SIN.

"I NEVER hate sin so much as when I come to Christ as one of His disciples might have come, and watch Him there in Judea day by day, and listen. I never feel so much that it will be a constant fight as when I follow Him to the cross and see the strength of sin there. But I never feel sin so weak as when I think of Him risen, and—the very same Jesus—gone into heaven, and from heaven watching, succouring, fighting for me, just as on earth He prayed and bled for me."

DR. WILLIAM F. STEVENSON.

Dec. 2.

INFIRMITY A SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

IT is hard for us to imagine how flat and shallow human life would be if there were taken out of it this constant element—the coming up of the

spiritual life where the physical life has failed. A man who never knew an ache or a pain comes to a break in health, from which he can look out on nothing but years of sickness; and then the soul within him.....claims its independence and supremacy, and stands strong in the midst of weakness, calm in the very centre of the turmoil and panic of the aching body. The temper of the fickle people changes, and the favourite of yesterday becomes the victim of to-day; but in his martyrdom he sees for the first time the full value of the truth he dies for, and thanks the flames that have lighted up its preciousness.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 8.

TO FOLLOW IN THEIR STEPS.

I AM sure that the world is a better place for you and me to live in to-day, not merely for the hundred great pattern lives which have passed into the heavens, and which we call still by their names, but far more for the countless, nameless multitude of men and women who have wrought into the very substance of the earth, where at last they lay their bodies in unnoticed graves, the great, first, simplest words of God—that man was sacred, that duty was possible, that self-sacrifice was sweet, and that love for one's brother was the crown of

life. And you ought not to be satisfied until you find yourself able to feel that the hope of doing something by your living to make the world in a real, although an unappreciable, degree more full of these words for the men who are to follow us, is the noblest and most inspiring promise which can be set before your soul. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 4.

"NOT MY WILL."

TRUE, the most earnest Christian may err about the will of God. He may pray for sunshine when it is the will of God that it should rain; he may ask for comfort when it is God's will that he should suffer. But this can only come in superficial things. In the one central thing of all—his own spiritual life—he cannot err. He knows that "this is the will of God, even his sanctification." He may cry out for that with perfect certainty; and for all other things, if he prays as every Christian ought, submitting his prayer to God's revision, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done," then, whether the special blessing that he asked is sent or not, the larger petition with which he covered in and included his lesser one is surely answered. The thing he really "willed" is "done unto him."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 3.

BEGIN WELL.

THERE is an old-world proverb, "What is well begun is half ended." It refers, of course, to success in some specific work. To bring success into a day, the wise course is to begin it at the throne of grace. A morning sacrifice of this sort is due to God. But still more is it needful for us to have guidance, strength, and usefulness through the day's duties and temptations. Reader, do not fail thus to begin the day, not in mere form, but in sincerity of soul.

JOHN HALL.

Dec. 3.

MY BROTHER!

YOU cannot do your duty to the poor by a society. Your life must touch their life. You try to work solely by a society, and what does it come to? Is it not the old story of the Book of Samuel? The traveller appeals to you, and you spare to take of your own thought and time and sympathy to give to the wayfaring man that is come to you; they are too precious. You say: "There is thought, time, sympathy, down at the charity bureau to which I have a right by virtue of the contribution I have made. Go down and get a ticket's worth of that."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 7.

YOUR HIGHEST SELF.

GREAT is the power of a life which knows that its highest experiences are its truest experiences—that it is most itself when it is at its best. For it each high achievement, each splendid vision, is a sign and token of the whole nature's possibility. What a piece of the man was for that shining instant, it is the duty of the whole man to be always.....Strive for your best, that there you may find your most distinctive life. We cannot dream of what interest the world will have when every being in its human multitude shall shine with his own light and colour, and be the child of God which it is possible for him to be—which he has ever been in the true homeland of his Father's thought.

The hope of the world is in the ever richer naturalness of the highest life.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 8.

"UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD."

WE set out for the battle in the morning strong and clean. By-and-by we catch a moment in the lull of the struggle to look down upon ourselves, and how tired and how covered with dust and blood we are. How long back our first purity

seems—how long the day seems sometimes—how long since we began to live! You know what stains are on your lives. Each of us knows, every man and woman. They burn to our eyes, even if no neighbour sees them. They burn in the still air of the Sabbath even if we do not see them in the week. You would not think for the world that your children should grow up to the same stains that have fastened upon you. You dream for them of a life “unspotted from the world,” and the very anxiety of that dream proves how you know that your own life is spotted and stained.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 9.

FAITH LINKED WITH LOVE.

GOD'S way of clearing the guilty is not only glorious; it is so simple that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. We come to God for pardon; He gives, and we receive: all the rest follows—sanctification and a new life. Then oh, the happiness of walking through the world at peace with God, the hand of faith in the hand of love, and knowing that all things work together for our good!

DR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON.

Dec. 10.

STRENGTHENED WITH ALL MIGHT.

ONE sufferer cries, "Lord, make me strong;" another sufferer cries, "Lord, let me rest upon Thy strength." Do you say they come to the same thing? Yes, if the doing of the task, the bearing of the pain, is everything; yes, if the only object is that the ship may not founder and the back may not break. But if, beyond this, there is hope and purpose that the man who does the task or bears the load shall himself become Godlike in his doing and suffering, then no mere deposit of the strength of God can do the work—only the ever-open union of his life with God's, which makes the two lives really one, so that the power that is in God is not made the man's by being transferred from God's to him, but is his because it is God's.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 11.

THE NEW MAN.

THE real question everywhere is whether the world, distracted and confused as everybody sees that it is, is going to be patched up and restored to what it used to be, or whether it is going forward into a quite new and different kind of life, whose exact nature nobody can pretend to foretell, but which is to be distinctly new, unlike the life of any age which the world has seen already.....It

is impossible that the old conditions, so shaken and broken, can ever be repaired and stand just as they stood before. The time has come when something more than mere repair and restoration of the old is necessary. The old must die, and a new must come forth out of its tomb.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 12.

ALL THINGS POSSIBLE.

JESUS "came unto his own." To men forgetful of their Godlike nature He came to tell them that they were the sons of God; and to men who could not do without Him He came because they needed Him. O my dear friends, by what high warrants does the Saviour claim us for His own! Because we are His Father's children, and because we are so needy, therefore our divine Brother comes. He comes to you and says, "You called me." And you look up out of your worldliness and say, "Oh no! I did not call. I do not know you!" But He says calmly, "You did, although you do not know it. That power of being Godlike which is in you, crushed and unsatisfied—that summoned me; and that need of being forgiven and renewed which you will not own—that summoned me. And here I am! Now wilt thou be made whole? If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 13.

"FOUNDED UPON A ROCK."

THAT which is rooted in God must live. There is no hope or peace anywhere in the world if this is not true. Who cares which way the fickle wind is blowing at this minute if there be no purpose which stands behind and governs it, no One who holds the winds in His hands? But if there be, who will not labour bravely, trying to put himself into the current of the great purpose of the world; begging to be defeated if he mistakes the great purpose and is helping evil when he thinks that he is helping good; ready to wait and work through all delays, sure of one thing and only one—that in the end, through every hindrance and delay, God must do right? PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 14.

BEHIND ALL—GOD.

THE construction of life is everywhere the same. Wherever the background is lost, the foreground grows false and thin. What is this foolish realism in our literature but the loss of the background of the ideal, without which every real is base and sordid? In how many bright books there is no God treading on the high places of the earth; nay, there are no high places of the earth for God to tread upon. What is the practical man's con-

tempt for theory? What is the modern man's contempt for history? What is the ethical man's contempt for religion? All of them are the denials of the background of life. All of them, therefore, are thin and weak.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 15.

NOTHING LACKING.

IT is redemption and fulfilment that Christ comes to bring to man. There is a true humanity which is to be restored, and all whose unattained possibilities are to be filled out.....Man is a child of God, for whom his Father's house is waiting. The whole creation is groaning and travailing until man shall be complete.

As soon as we understand all this, then what a great, clear thing salvation becomes! Its one idea is health. Not rescue from suffering, not plucking out of fire, not deportation to some strange, beautiful region where the winds blow with other influences and the skies drop with other dews, not the enchaining of the spirit with some unreal celestial spell, but health—the cool, calm vigour of the normal human life, the making of the man to be himself, the calling up out of the depths of his being and the filling with vitality of that self which is truly he—this is salvation.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 16.

EVERYTHING IN ITS TIME.

THE soul which God is training in solitude thinks its life wasted because it is cut off from society, and the soul that God keeps in the very midst of its fellows sighs for the joy and culture of being alone.

If we could only know that in its time only is any Christian mood or condition beautiful, and that God only knows its time! When the day is over, the stars will come, and then it is good to see them; but to see them before that, in the sunlight, you must go, men say, down to the bottom of a well, where you do not belong, which is unnatural and unhealthy. When we have done with earth the heaven will come; and till that, only such heaven—and it is not a little—as is possible upon the dear old earth.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 17.

GOD'S GOODNESS IN ALL.

DELIGHT, enthusiasm, hope, content—these are the true conditions of a Christian life, just as song is the true condition of the bird, or colour of the rose. But just as the bird is still a bird although it cannot sing, and the rose is still a rose although its red grows dull and faded in some dark, close room where it is compelled to

grow ; so the Christian is a Christian still, even although his soul is dark with doubt, and he goes staggering on, fearing every moment that he will fall, never daring to look up and hope.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 18.

CHRISTLIKENESS.

THERE are three things which characterized the life of Jesus—prayer, teaching, and doing good. To take Him for example in these—to live with that devotion and sacrifice—is Christlike. But to be Christlike is no easy matter. It takes purpose, grace, patience. We must be constantly in touch with the Master. It takes His infused strength as well as His inspiring life. And the atmosphere of frivolity or doubt is not conducive to it. One must keep himself unspotted from the world.

REV. F. A. ARNOLD.

Dec. 19.

A CONSTANT FRIEND.

IT is a beautiful connection, one whose mysterious beauty we are always learning more and more, that the deeper our spiritual experience of Christ becomes, the more our soul's life really hangs on His life as its Saviour and continual Friend, the

more real becomes to us the unquenched life of those who have gone from us to be with Him.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 20.

TO LIVE FOR GOD.

LABOUR and patience, activity and the growth which comes by passive suffering, ought always to make one single total life.....Make your most restful contemplation, and your most receptive listening at the lips of God, not to be mere spiritual luxuries, but to be forms and modes of action. Make them acts. Let them call your powers into play. Let them be not listless, but full of vigour. Let them anticipate work for God and service of His children so earnestly and eagerly that they themselves shall be work and service.

He who learns these lessons lives a life as deep as the ocean and as powerful. There is no tedium nor fretfulness for him. His life catches the quality of the life of God. He works while it is called to-day, and yet he has already reached the rest which remaineth for God's people. Such lives may God help us to live.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 21.

THIRSTING FOR GOD.

THE truth of a personal God is the great and fundamental need of philosophy and of human life, the one profoundest want of man's brain and of his heart. The great masters of sceptical thought, after the profoundest investigations into the science of the known and the probable, come back with the awestruck air of men who have heard footsteps which they cannot trace, and the rustle of royal robes whose wearer is unknown to them. Thus they go a step further than Athens, which worshipped the "unknown God," while they recognize merely the "unknown." I am reminded of some doubters by the royal psalmist: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"—as though only a fool could say it, and he only in his heart. Lord Bacon, great in logic and not mean in philosophy, said, "I would rather believe all the fables of the Talmud and the Koran than that this universal frame is without a mind." The great want of philosophy is God; and if of philosophy, how much more of the great, aching brain and heart of the world, which in every age has cried out, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." CYRUS D. FOSS.

Dec. 22.

I HAD A FRIEND.

THERE is as yet no culture, no method of progress known to men, that is so rich and complete as that which is ministered by a truly great friendship. No natural appetite, no artificial taste, no rivalry of competition, no contagion of social activity, calls out such a large, healthy, symmetrical working of a human nature as the constant, half-unconscious power of a friend's presence whom we thoroughly respect and love. In a true friendship there is emulation without its jealousy; there is imitation without its servility. When one friend teaches another by his present life, there is none of that divorce of truth from feeling, and of feeling from truth, which in so many of the world's teachings makes truth hard and feeling weak; but truth is taught, and feeling is inspired, by the same action of one nature on the other, and they keep each other true and warm. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 23.

CHRIST IN YOU.

RELIGION makes us feel the littleness to which we have reduced our lives, and then proclaims, in contrast with that littleness, the great capacity God meant them to have. "You have cramped your life," it seems to say. "You

have made it small and narrow. By long unspirituality you have made its doors so low that none but short or stooping thoughts can enter. You have made its rooms so mean that great truths cannot live in them. But never dare to think that this was God's plan for your life. He drew its architecture on a lordly scale. He designed for you great, generous, capacious lives. He built you to be 'temples of the Holy Ghost.' You may make your lives foul and tawdry and meagre—you may diminish and overcrowd them till there is no room for a noble thought or a pure desire—but you do it at your peril. God made them roomy; and there is room for His holy Son to find a nativity within them if you will only set and keep their chambers open."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 24.

NOT LOST.

WE must not think the connection between dear departed Christians and ourselves closed by death. They are perfectly happy, and so we do not pray for them. Nor do we pray to them, for they are not like the Hearer of prayer, and we have the one Mediator. But we are to remember the graces of the Spirit in them, to imitate their lives, and to dwell with satisfaction

on the prospect of being again in tender and holy fellowship with them. Reader, do you recall saintly lives with which you were in contact? Do you remember faithful words they spoke to you?

JOHN HALL.

Dec. 23.

THE WISDOM OF GOD.

REMEMBER what Christ is called in St. John's Gospel—"the Word." A word is wisdom in utterance. Remember what St. Paul calls Christ—"the power of God and the wisdom of God." Remember what is said of the Word in that first chapter of St. John: "In the beginning was the Word. He was with God, and he was God." "He was in the beginning with God." "All things were made by him." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." It is just exactly what is said of Wisdom in.....Proverbs: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way." "When he prepared the heavens, I was there." "Whoso findeth me, findeth life." See how the Word was just the *Wisdom* at last uttering itself to a needy world—this divine love and grace and truth, which we have been tracing in creation and in providence, at last coming, that men might know them perfectly, and putting on humanity, and becoming incarnate in Jesus Christ.

Oxford Review.

Dec. 26.

TOWARD EVENING.

THE year which came to us twelve months ago, all fresh and young, is old and weary. A new year will come to crowd him from his place. On such a day it is not mere habit—it is a natural and healthy instinct—which makes us stand between the new year and the old, between the living and the dead, and listen to them as they speak to one another. The old year says to the new year, "Take this man, and show him greater things than I have been able to show him. You must be for him a fuller, richer day of the Lord than I could be." The new year says to the old, "I will take him, and do for him the best that I can do. But all that I can do for him will be possible only in virtue of the preparation which you have made, only because of what you have done for him already."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 27.

GLORIFYING THE FATHER.

SHINE with Christ's light. The moon rises and shines, but not with her own light—she gathers all from the sun; so do you. Shine in such a way that Christ shall have all the glory. They shine brightest who feel most their own darkness, and are most clothed in Christ's bright-

ness. Oh, wherever you go make it manifest that your light and peace all come from Him; that it is by looking unto Jesus that you shine; that your holiness all comes from union to Him. "Let your light so shine before men."

R. MURRAY M'CHEYNE.

Dec. 28.

HIDDEN REALITIES.

IF around this instability of human life is wrapped the great permanence of the life of God.....if the whole element of time is so lost in His eternity that not the beginning and the ending of experiences, but their spiritual relations to our growing characters, is everything—then is there not light upon it all? To value everything which comes to me, and yet to know that not its form but its spiritual essence is really valuable, therefore to hasten while I have it to get out of it what it has to give me, and to even rejoice that some day in the loss of its formal presence I shall be able to make myself completely sure of the possession of its spirit—that is the true attitude of the soul toward every good thing that God gives—health, friends, wealth, learning, *time*.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 29.

FEAR NOT THE FUTURE.

O FRIENDS, the old year is fast slipping back behind us. We cannot stay in it if we would. We must go forth and leave our past. Let us go forth nobly. Let us go as those whom greater thoughts and greater deeds await beyond. Let us go humbly, solemnly, bravely, as those must go who go to meet the Lord. With firm, quiet, serious steps, full of faith, full of hope, let us go to meet Him who will certainly judge us when we meet Him, but who loves us while He judges us, and who, if we are only obedient, will make us, by the discipline of all the years, fit for the everlasting world, where life shall count itself by years no longer.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

Dec. 30.

THE WORLD'S HOPE.

WE naturally dwell much on the lowly life of our blessed Saviour as He dwelt among men. We have to keep away all mere sentiment and all superstition, and to dwell on the truth as put in Scripture. This Holy Child is to be remembered as Wonderful, to be waited upon as Counsellor, to be worshipped as the mighty God, to be obeyed as the Father of the ages or dispensations

(of which we enjoy the last and the best), and to be rejoiced in as the Prince of Peace.

JOHN HALL.

Dec. 31.

IN GOD'S WORLD.

YOU are in God's world ; you are God's child. Those things you cannot change ; the only peace and rest and happiness for you is to accept them and rejoice in them. When God speaks to you, you must not make believe to yourself that it is the wind blowing or the torrent falling from the hill. You must know that it is God. You must gather up the whole power of meeting Him. You must be thankful that life is great, and not little. You must listen as if listening were your life. And then, then only can come peace. All other sounds will be caught up into the prevailing richness of that voice of God. The lost proportions will be perfectly restored. Discord will cease ; harmony will be complete. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

THE END.





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